

*Collection of Felix Topolski*

#### Cloth and silk merchant.

"These like the millinery pedlars hank about and call at the gates of European houses, followed by porters carrying large and heavy bundles of cloth and silks fabricated in the country; their shops are in Burma bazaar, some of these merchants are very rich possessing in cloth and silk to an immense value. . . . The merchant represented in this plate is supposed to have sold some pieces of silk to the lady for which the gentleman pays him in gold mohours, and appears to insist upon the exact change being returned, against which the man seems to remonstrate alleging that the whole piece of gold would scarcely afford a trifling profit. . . ."

# THE TRAVELLER'S EYE

BY DOROTHY CARRINGTON

---

*With a Foreword by Maurice Collis*

34812



R 016.9104  
car

~~14328~~

Ref 910.4  
car

L O N D O N  
THE PILOT PRESS LTD

1 9 4 7



First published 1947, by  
The Pilot Press Ltd., 45 Great  
Russell Street, London, W.C.1

**CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
LIBRARY, NEW DELHI.**

Acc. No. 342/2

Date 23.6.58

By R. P. 16. 9104

To CAS.

Francis Rose

**CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
LIBRARY, NEW DELHI.**

Acc. 194

Date 24.5.52

By 9109 / Cas

*Booth. Raj Mahal, Delhi. a. 24.5.52 R. 11/57*

## FOREWORD

By MAURICE COLLIS

*The Traveller's Eye* is not Dorothy Carrington's first book, but it is her first considerable book of history. To display the English traveller from Tudor times to the present day in his course over four continents and five oceans requires wide reading; to achieve clearness and avoid dullness in the handling of such a conglomeration of facts needs style, grasp and a gift for arrangement. Dorothy Carrington has got the reading, got the style, and knows how to organise her global canvas. She has produced at once an encyclopædia, an anthology and an essay; she shows herself both scholar and woman of letters. Her outlook is robust, her mind is accurate, her vocabulary animated, her wit trenchant. She treads over treacherous ground with delicacy and after a vast detour comes in breathing well.



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD BY MAURICE COLLIS . . . . .	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .	ix
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	i
PART I: TRAVELLING TO THE EAST	
1. Paris and France . . . . .	5
2. Venice and Italy . . . . .	40
3. Constantinople and Turkey . . . . .	74
4. Asia . . . . .	116
5. China . . . . .	174
PART II: TRAVELLING TO THE WEST	
6. West Africa and the West Indies . . . . .	222
7. America . . . . .	277
8. The Pacific . . . . .	330
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	377
INDEX . . . . .	379





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Silk and cloth merchant.

Frontispiece

From *Twenty-four Plates Illustrative of Hindoo and European Manners in Bengal. Drawn on the stone from Sketches by Mrs. Belnos.* By kind permission of Mr. Felix Topolski.

PLATE I

*facing page 18*

The basilisk fountain in Cardinal Richelieu's garden at Ruel.

From a contemporary engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE II

*facing page 19*

A troop of gipsies.

From an engraving by Jacques Callot. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE III

*facing page 34*

A fête in the *Colisée* in 1772.

Miniature by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin. From the original in the Wallace Collection, by permission.

PLATE IV

*facing page 35*

The English in Paris (1815).

PLATE IV

*facing page 35*

The Gallant Cossack (1815).

From lithographs by Carle Vernet. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE V

*facing page 50*

A Venetian courtesan wearing *cioppini*.

From an engraving in *Diversarum nationum ornatus*, A Fabri, 1593. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE V

*facing page 50*

A human pyramid.

From an eighteenth-century engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE V

*facing page 50*

A Venetian lady drying her hair in a *solana*.

From an engraving in *Diversarum nationum ornatus*, A Fabri, 1593. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE VI

*facing page 51*

Venetian girls visiting their relatives in monasteries on the occasion of their betrothals.

From an engraving in *Habiti delle donne Venetiane*, Giacomo Franco, 1610. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

## PLATE VII

facing page 66

A Venetian carnival in the eighteenth century.

From a contemporary engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

## PLATE VIII

facing page 67

The Triumph of China: a fantastic gondola designed by Alessandro Mauro for a water pageant in 1716.

From the original design in the Civico Museo Correr, Venice. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

## PLATE IX

facing page 82

Soliman the Magnificent passing in procession through the Roman Circus in Constantinople.

From a woodcut published in Antwerp in 1553 after a drawing made by Peter Coeck van Aelst in Constantinople in 1523. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

## PLATE X

facing page 83

Soliman the Magnificent.

From an engraving made from life by the Danish artist Melchoir Lorichs. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

## PLATE XI

facing page 98

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in Turkish dress.

From an enamel miniature in the Victoria and Albert Museum. By permission, Crown Copyright reserved.

## PLATE XII

facing page 99

A palace on the Bosphorus.

From *Constantinople and the Scenery of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor. Illustrated in a series of drawings from nature by Thomas Allom. 1838.*

## PLATE XIII

facing page 130

The Mountains of Judea.

## PLATE XIII

facing page 130

The cave of St. John the Baptist.

From engravings in George Sandys' *Relation of a Journey Begun An. Dom. 1610.*

## PLATE XIV

facing page 131

Shah Abbas.

From a contemporary Persian miniature. By courtesy of the British Museum.

- PLATE XV facing page 146  
 Agents of the Shah of Persia collecting concubines for the royal harem.  
 From an engraving in *Les Voyages de Jean Struys*, 1681. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.
- PLATE XVI facing page 147  
 Thomas Coryate riding an elephant.  
 From a woodcut in *Thomas Coriate Traveller for the English wits: Greeting. From the Court of the Great Mogul, Resident at the Towne of Asmere in Easterne India*. 1616. By courtesy of the British Museum.
- PLATE XVII facing page 178  
 Macao in the early seventeenth century.
- PLATE XVII facing page 178  
 A Chinese eating with chopsticks.  
 From drawings by Peter Mundy.
- PLATE XVIII facing page 179  
 Warehouse of European tea merchants in Canton.
- PLATE XIX facing page 194  
 Portraits of Ch'ien Lung.
- PLATE XX facing page 195  
 River Scene.  
 From Chinese water colours given to Lord Macartney by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung. These water colours were pasted by Lord Macartney onto the blank pages of a privately made Royal Folio volume together with the printed text of the first edition of his journal recording his embassy to China. This unique book is now in the possession of Mr. A. Bahr, who most kindly allowed me to study it and to reproduce these paintings.
- PLATE XXI facing page 226  
 The Camelian given to Nicholas Owen by King Sumana.
- PLATE XXI facing page 226  
 Nicholas Owen's house on the River Sherboro.
- PLATE XXII facing page 227  
 Surry King of Sherboro.  
 From drawings by Nicholas Owen.
- PLATE XXIII facing page 242  
 The Harbour of Antigua seen from Great George Fort.  
 From a colour print in *A Series of Views of the West Indies*, 1827. Reproduced by courtesy of the British Museum.



- PLATE XXIV facing page 243  
 "The Voyage of the Sable Venus from Angola to the West Indies."  
 From an engraving in *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*. By Bryan Edwards F.R.S., S.A. 1791.
- PLATE XXV facing page 290  
 The Quilting Party.  
 From an American primitive painting, oil on wood, 1840-50. Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York. By permission.
- PLATE XXVI facing page 291  
 Winter Sunday in Norway, Maine.  
 From an American primitive painting, oil on canvas, c. 1870. Collection of Jean Lipman. By permission.
- PLATE XXVII facing page 306  
 The first transcontinental train leaving Sacramento, California, in May 1896, cheered by Chinese workmen.  
 From the original painting by Joseph Becker in the collection of Mrs. Harry MacNeil Bland. By permission.
- PLATE XXVIII facing page 307  
 An American Pullman Parlour Railway Car.  
 From an engraving in George Sala's *America Revisited*, 1882.
- PLATE XXIX facing page 338  
 The painted prince Jeoly.  
 From the engraving in the pamphlet; *An Account of the Famous Prince Giolo, Son of the King of Gilolo, Now in England; with an Account of his Life, Parentage, and his strange and wonderful Adventures; The Manner of his being brought for England; with a Description of the island of Gilolo, and the Adjacent Isle of Celebes; Their Religion and Manners*. Written from his own Mouth. 1692. By courtesy of the British Museum.
- PLATE XXX facing page 339  
 View of the Island of Tenian visited by Captain Anson.  
 From an engraving in *A Voyage Round the World*, by George Anson, 1748.
- PLATE XXXI facing page 354  
 Funeral rites in Tahiti.  
 From an engraving after a drawing from nature by W. Hodges illustrating *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World*. Performed in His Majesty's Ships the *Resolution* and *Adventure*, In the Years 1772, 1773, 1774 and 1775. By James Cook.
- PLATE XXXII facing page 355  
 Icebergs in the Antarctic seen by Cook on January 9th, 1773.  
 From an engraving after a drawing from nature by W. Hodges illustrating *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World* etc.

## THE ILLUSTRATIONS ON THE DUST JACKET

### FRONT

A European gentleman travelling in the East.

From an eighteenth century Persian miniature. Author's collection.

"A coco tree, a batt, a tropique bird, a palmeto tree."

From an engraving in *Some yeares Travels into divers parts of Asia and Afrique*, 1638. By Sir Thomas Herbert.

"*Fakir indien qui par pénitence reste une partie du jour dans la même posture.*"

From a colour print, dated 1783, in a very curious French book on Indian fakirs, without title page. Collection of Felix Topolski.

A gondola in the form of a unicorn for an eighteenth-century water pageant in Venice.

From the original design in the Civico Museo Correr, Venice. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

### BACK

Dalmatian Scene.

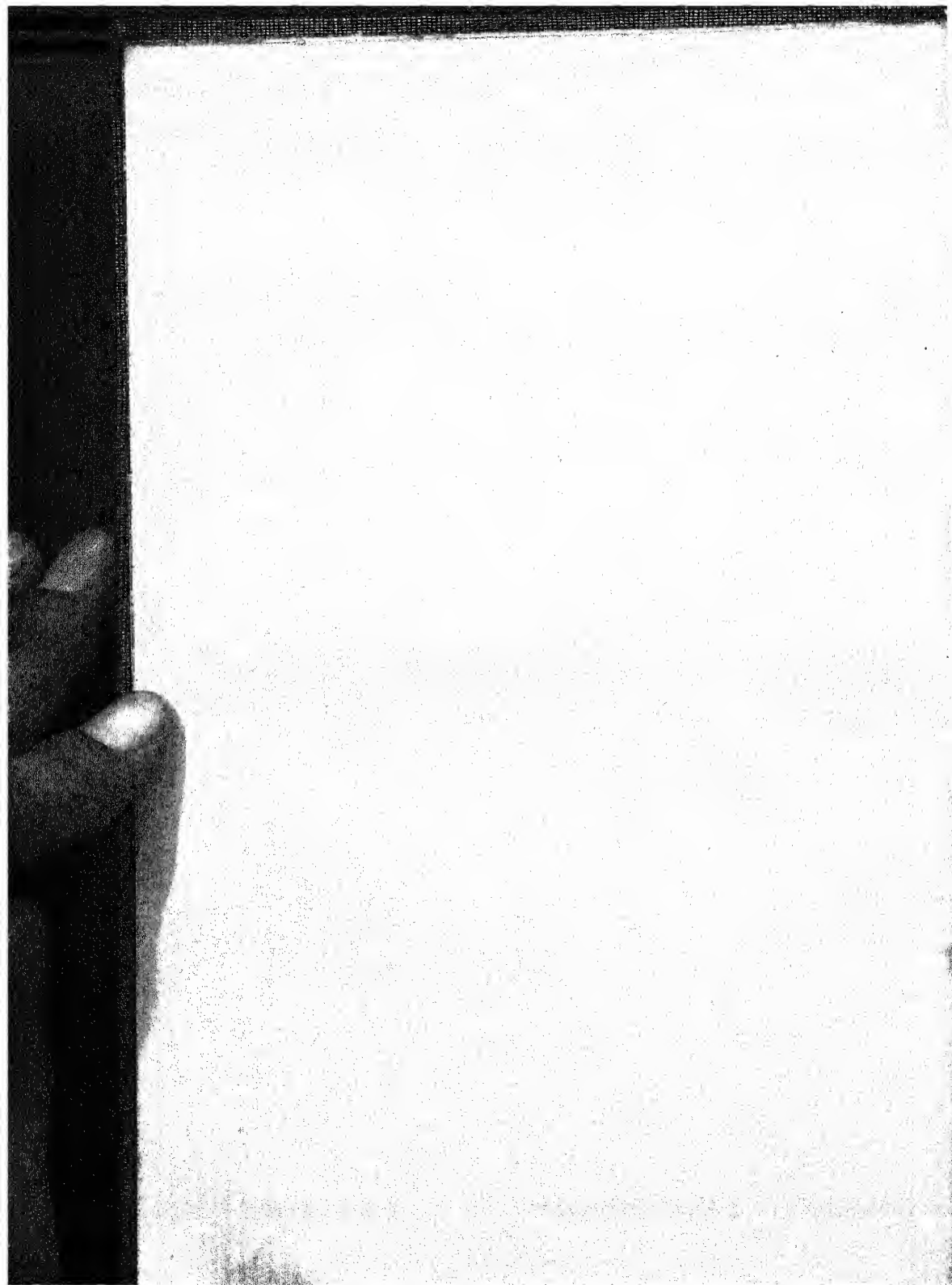
From an engraving in *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Istrie et la Dalmatie*. Paris An X. (1802). Rédigé d'après l'itinéraire de L. S. Cassas par Joseph Lavallée. Collection of Felix Topolski.

Venetian Scene.

From an eighteenth century engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Prince Louis of Battenburg driving "a pair of very beautiful little oxen, not as large as Shetland ponies."

From *The Prince of Wales' Tour : a diary in India with some account of the visits of His Royal Highness to the Courts of Greece, Egypt, Spain and Portugal*, 1877. By William Howard Russell. Collection of Felix Topolski.



## INTRODUCTION

I ONCE tried to make an anthology of English travel literature; within a short time my material had overflowed any convenient limits, spread into several typewritten volumes—in short—defeated me. The accumulation of travellers' journals, already great when Hakluyt made his compilation in the sixteenth century, seemed now too vast and various to be surveyed intelligibly in a single volume. Travel, after all, until recently has been slow; travellers creeping overland in coach and palanquin, on horseback and on foot, painfully zigzagging across the oceans at the mercy of storms and calms and contrary winds, had time to spare and to kill, unlimited tedious hours to while away describing their interrupted and circuitous journeys. Their writing, accordingly, is often as leisurely as was their progress: few of their descriptions amount to as little as a page.

My reading however yielded something more than a collection of agreeably copious descriptions. In the unsifted and largely forgotten mass of English travel literature I gradually became aware of a development, as definite as that of English poetry or of the English novel. The travellers of pre-Elizabethan England, men as opposite as the sensational romancer Mandeville and a devout pilgrim priest, shared a dream-like conception of the world, a familiarity with monsters and miracles which belongs to their unscientific times. The Elizabethan travellers, the first great English explorers, have been made famous in the pages of Hakluyt's *Voyages*, where their magnificent sonorous prose reflects the exaltation that inspired even their most brutal and mercenary exploits. Less known are the travel writers of the century that followed: the age of curiosity, when an elephant and an earthquake, a chicken incubator and a tattooed savage were objects equally marvellous. Many have been forgotten among those eager tourists who went abroad to study the mechanical singing birds and musical fountains of European palaces, the Venetian manner of handling a cloak or the French fashions in gardening, and those seamen who, toiling across the discovered but still perilous oceans to fetch cinnamon and calico and bed canopies from Asia or tobacco from America, found time to observe tombs and temples and tortures, devils skipping on icebergs and innumerable varieties of bird and fish and plant. No travel literature is more vivid than the exuberantly worded journals of these men to whom so much in the world was new.

Enthusiastic astonishment waned with the century; the marvels dwindled; English taste became standardised. The eighteenth-century travellers—aristocratic visitors to courts and capitals, connoisseurs of painting and the antique, slave traders, ambassadors and prosperous servants of the



East India Company—were sophisticated, critical and self-assured. The best of their journals are written with a wit and conscious polished brilliance that have never been excelled, the worst with a tedious urbane pedantry. They were the forerunners of the more rigid and censorious Victorians, to whom Europe was old and smelly, America crude and new, and the rest of the world inhabited by natives. But severity was counterpoised by romanticism, that beguilingly anarchic movement which sprang up in the late eighteenth century and has only recently died. The enchanting journals of sensitive and rebellious romantic travellers, among whom were poets and artists, have added permanent lustre to the ruins and torrents, chasms and deserts, of Europe and the Near East. Every subsequent visitor has seen partly through their eyes. In the latter part of the eighteenth century began also the second series of great English explorers, the truly scientific travellers, seeking not wealth, like the Elizabethan navigators, but knowledge. Their work has extended from the time of Cook, who put one continent on the map and eliminated another, until our own age, when nothing is left to be revealed save a few pockets in jungles and deserts and polar regions. But perhaps the next explorers will explore the moon.

At the time I write this, travel has become difficult, perhaps more difficult than at any time in the last two centuries. Since the many left at home are greedy for news, the few privileged travellers must all be reporters; roaring over continents at unparalleled speed and in no great comfort, they recognise their duty to jot down their impressions of the dislocated world. The few who stay long in one place are zealous observers resembling the travellers of the seventeenth century, save that their study is no longer nature but man. The investigator of social conditions is the latest type of English traveller, and the world he portrays is as unlike that of the Victorian globe trotters as theirs was different from the wondrous mediæval world of Mandeville. A new conception of the world is being formed in our time.

If English travel literature tells how Englishmen have looked on the world, inevitably, it tells how they have acted in it. That is the story of the empire. The motive that caused Englishmen to venture out of their small cloudy island was always the same: it was their desire for wealth, for luxury, for fine possessions—in short—for a higher standard of civilisation. While many travelled to acquire taste and learning, others—and they have been more honoured by popular opinion—sought wealth in its cruder and material form. Their object was trade, and if necessary, conquest. First the Orient, celebrated for its fabulous wealth in ancient and mediæval legend, allured them; soon the New World, accidentally discovered in the course of Europe's search for routes to the East, distracted their attention. Asia produced solid fortunes for a few merchants, but no miraculous treasure; and as the hope of easy riches in the East faded it was transferred to America, the land of the mythical Eldorado. The North American col-

onies, founded with heart-breaking struggle, likewise failed to provide the mountains of gold and jewels that have always haunted European imagination; later the Southern Continent in the Pacific, the last of the geographical mysteries, was proved by Cook to be an illusion.

With Cook's negative discovery the fantastic dreams of empire came to an end; thenceforth effort had to be confined to developing the territories already known. By the close of the nineteenth century all these were explored and divided between the European nations; our own age, convulsed by attempted conquests, has discredited the system of empire.

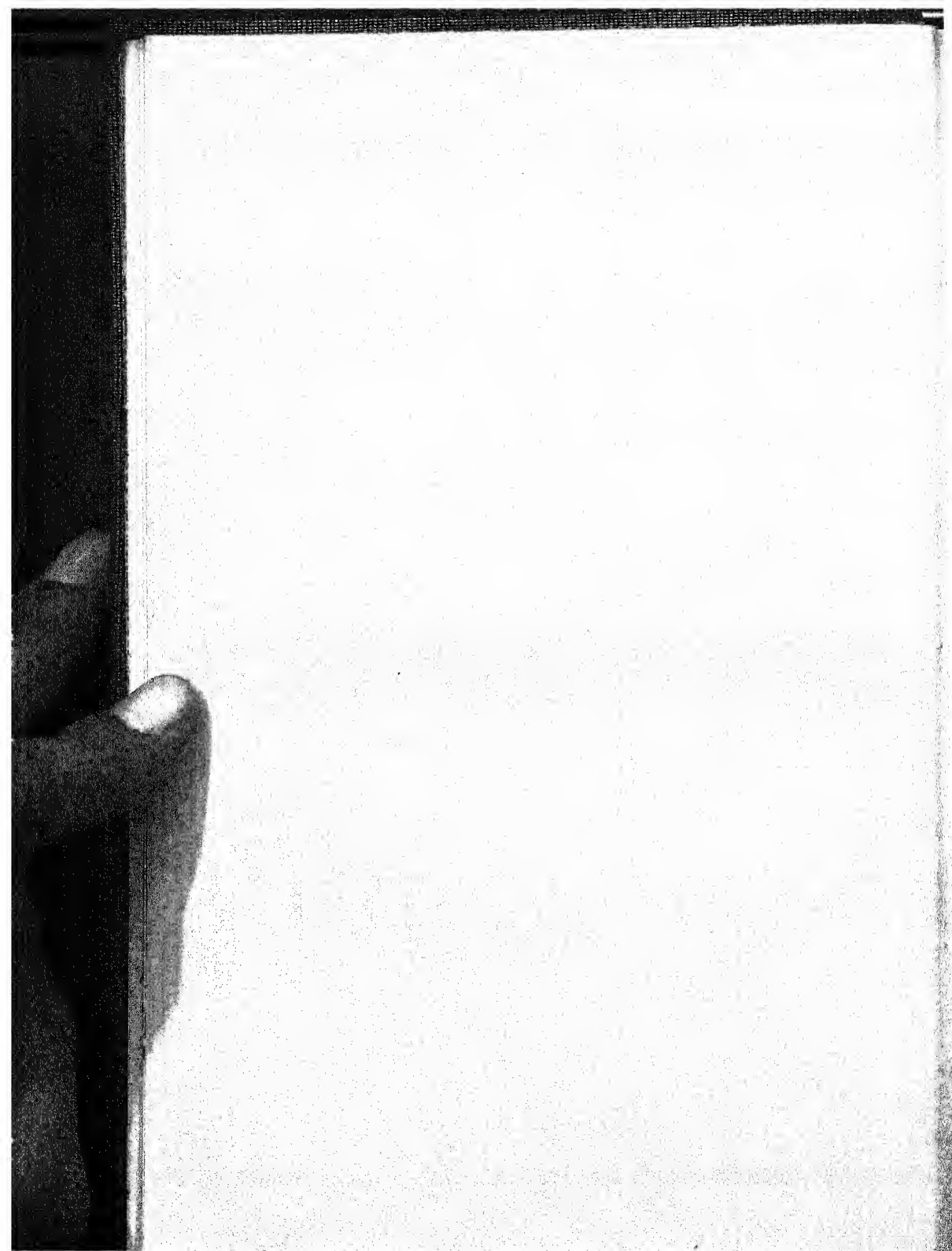
These are the two stories, the story of how the English have looked on the world, and the story of how they have acted in it, that emerged from my reading of English travel literature, and these I have attempted to sketch in this book, in lightest outline, by means of quotation. Necessarily, I have omitted several famous and admirable travel writers, and certain countries that have inspired a rich travel literature. In developing my two interconnected themes I have been forced to exclude as much interesting material as I have used; many books remain to be written on the enthralling and neglected subject of English travellers.

#### NOTE

In all the extracts quoted in this book I have modernised the spelling. I have done this because I believe that their interest lies more in what they express than in their antiquarian flavour. The much admired quaint spelling of the seventeenth century, and the eighteenth century rash of capitals, in my opinion are liable to give false charm to works attractive enough without any such irrelevant recommendation, while the spelling of the earliest travel writers is so quaint as to render their meaning almost unintelligible. Obsolete words and forms of words, and certain proper names, I have left in their original spelling, also titles of works, which are printed in full. I have not changed punctuation except in one or two passages where the absence of it in the original text obscures the sense.

For the sake of both simplicity and euphony I have almost invariably used the words England and English, even when Britain or British would be technically more exact. I am aware that some of the travellers I have mentioned, although they have contributed to what is commonly known as English literature, were of Irish, Scottish, or perhaps Welsh origin.

Acknowledgments, because of their length, are printed at the end of the book.



## PART I

### TRAVELLING TO THE EAST

#### I. PARIS AND FRANCE

TRAVELLING for no other object than pleasure—touring—the most civilised form of travel, first became popular among Englishmen in the early seventeenth century. This was a period in England of prosperity and poets, when the veils of geographical ignorance had just been lifted, when the wealth of India had begun to seep into the kingdom, and an empire was being won in the New World. Then, when England was a young and rising nation, Englishmen flocked to Europe—as did Americans of later times—to study arts and manners, the technique of elegant living. Everything foreign entranced them. Thomas Coryate spoke for his age when he wrote: “Of all the pleasures in the world, travel is (in my opinion) the sweetest and most delightful. For what can be more pleasant than to see passing variety of beautiful cities, kings’ and princes’ courts, impregnable fortresses, towers piercing in a manner up to the clouds, fertile territories replenished with a very cornucopia of all manner of commodities as it were with the horn of Amalthea, tending to pleasure and profit, that the heart of man can wish for?”

Cities, courts, buildings, commodities—these were the things that impressed him; not scenery—love of majestic Alps and raging cataracts belong to the less intellectually inquisitive travellers of succeeding centuries. It was in the works of man that Coryate found “the exuberancy and superfluity of these exotic pleasures,” in the populous Italian cities, and, of course, in Paris, the capital that has amazed, shocked, but invariably fascinated English travellers from the time of Coryate to the present day.

*Thomas Coryate<sup>1</sup>; Coryate’s Crudities Hastily gobbled up in five Moneths travells in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia commonly called the Grisons country, Helvetia alias Switzerland, some parts of high Germany and the*

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Coryate (1577?-1617) was born at Odcombe, Somersetshire, where his father, the Rev. George Coryate, prebendary of York Cathedral, was rector. As a young man he entered the household of Prince Henry, eldest son of James I.

*Netherlands ; Newly digested in the hungry aire of Odcombe in the County of Somerset, and now dispersed to the nourishment of the travelling members of this kingdome. (Pub. 1611.)*

Thomas Coryate, according to Ben Jonson, was a man "irrecoverably addicted" to travel: "The mere superscription of a letter from Zurich sets him up like a top: Basil or Heidleberg makes him spin. And at seeing the word Frankfort, or Venice, though but on the title of a book, he is ready to break doublet, crack elbows, and overflow the room with his murmurs." A five months' walking tour through Europe in 1608 resulted in his riotously popular book: *Coryate's Crudities Hastily Gobbled Up*; then, after hanging the shoes in which he had tramped the continent in his parish church at Odcombe, where they remained until the eighteenth century, he sailed to Constantinople, travelled to Egypt and the Holy Land, crossed Persia, reached India, visited the court of the Great Moghul, and finally arrived at the East India Company's factory at Surat, where he died from an orgy of drinking when suffering from "the flux": "being overkindly used by some English who gave him sack, which they had brought from England, he calling for it as soon as he first heard of it and crying, 'Sack, Sack, is there such a thing as Sack?'"<sup>1</sup>

That he wrote no book about his eastern journey must have been as much a regret to his contemporaries as it is to us,<sup>2</sup> for the *Crudities* was launched with boisterous applause. Encouraged by his patron Prince Henry, his friends, who included most of the great literary figures of the day, contributed a preface which gave the book dazzling publicity. Ben Jonson supplied the brilliant "character" of the author; Donne, Whitaker, Chapman, Campion, John Davies, Michael Drayton, Inigo Jones and many others less celebrated added "economistic and panegyrick verses,"<sup>3</sup> writing in Latin, Greek, English, French, Italian, Erse and Welsh, extravagantly, coarsely, facetiously, and one and all drunk with words in praise of that "most peerless poetical prose writer, the most transcendant tramontane traveller, and the most single soled, single-souled, and single shirted observer, the Odcombian Gallobelgicus."<sup>4</sup>

The prototype of voracious tourists, Coryate had left nothing undone; respectfully he had gazed at palaces, monuments and ceremonies, daringly he had visited one of the celebrated Venetian courtesans, with the object—

<sup>1</sup> From *A Voyage to East India observed by Edward Terry (then Chaplain to the Right Honourable Sir Thomas Roe knight, Lord Ambassador to the Great Mogul)*. Sir Thomas Roe was sent to the court of Jahangir, the Moghul Emperor, in 1615 to obtain trading facilities for the newly formed East India Company, which had already established a factory at Surat. His mission was on the whole successful.

<sup>2</sup> He however wrote some letters from the East which were published in 1616 under the title *Thomas Coryate Traveller for the English wits: Greeting. From the Court of the Great Mogul, Resident at the Towne of Asmere in Easterne India*.

<sup>3</sup> These were published by themselves in 1611 as *The Odcombian Banquet*.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Whitaker.



so he claimed—of saving her. With impartial enthusiasm he had written :

“Of mounts, of founts, of rocks, of stocks, of stones,  
Of boors, of whores, of tombs, of dead men’s bones,  
Of bowers, of towers, and many a stately steeple,  
Helvetians, Rhetians, and many an uncouth people.”<sup>1</sup>

His all-embracing guide book was the sensation of the literary world ; poet after poet, he explains, insisted on adding “elegant inventions,” so that “no book printed in England these hundred years, had the like written in praise thereof.” Coryate was indeed one of the characters of his day, a wit without rival in a society of wits. In the words of Ben Jonson he was a “great and bold carpenter of words,” his phrases were “such as if they were studied to make mourners merry : the body of his discourse able to break impostumes, remove the stone, open the passage from the bladder, and undo the very knots of the gout.” Conversation was his vocation : he was “frequent at all sorts of tables, where though he might sit as a guest, he will rather be served in as a dish, and is loth to have anything of himself kept cold against the next day.”

After this uproarious advertisement it is a surprise, and something of a relief, to find Coryate a pleasant, well-informed, and rather sober writer. Presumably he was one of those literary figures who are more remarkable in conversation than in print. His notorious visit to the Venetian whore makes very mild reading ; the record of his journey through France is vivid without being highly coloured.

Like many English travellers, Coryate began his journey with an attack of sea-sickness :

“I was embarked at Dover, about ten of the clock in the morning, the fourteenth of May, being Saturday and Whitsun-eve, Anno 1608, and arrived at Calais . . . about five o’clock in the afternoon, after I had varnished the exterior parts of the ship with the excremental ebullitions of my tumultuous stomach, as desiring to satiate the gormandising paunches of the hungry haddocks . . . with that wherewith I had superfluously stuffed myself on land, having made my rumbling belly their capacious aumbrie.”<sup>2</sup>

Paris, busy, modern, full of fine new buildings, was an imposing city :

“This city is exceeding great, being no less than ten miles in circuit, very populous, and full of very goodly buildings, both public and private, wherewith it is naturally more plentifully furnished than any city of Christendom that ever I read or heard of.”

<sup>1</sup> Robert Richmond.

<sup>2</sup> aumbrie : receptacle.

The Tuilleries, with its great gilded and painted rooms filled with the rich inlaid furniture of the renaissance, was one of the most splendid of the new Italianate palaces :

" This palace of the Tuilleries is a most magnificent building, having in it many sumptuous rooms. The chamber of presence is exceeding beautiful, whose roof is painted with many antique works, the sides and ends of this chamber are curiously adorned with pictures made in oilwork upon wainscot, wherein amongst many other things the nine Muses are excellently painted. One of the inner chambers hath an exceeding costly roof gilt, in which chamber there is a table made of so many several colours of marble, and so finely inlaid with ivory (which kind of work is called in Latin *cerostratum*), that it is thought to be worth above five hundred pound."

As highly prized as the interior was the garden; for elaborate gardens were the passion of seventeenth-century France. Although its fountains could not rival those of Fontainebleau, it boasted a very remarkable echo :

" There is a most pleasant prospect from that walk over the rails into the Tuillerie garden, which is the fairest garden for length of delectable walks that ever I saw, but for variety of delicate fountains and springs, much inferior to the King's garden at Fontaine Bealeu. There are two walks in this garden of an equal length, each being 700 paces long, whereof one is so artificially roofed over with timber work, that the boughs of the maple trees, wherewith the walk is on both sides beset, do reach up to the top of the roof, and cover it clean over. This roofed walk hath six fair arbours advanced to a great height like turrets . . . At the end of this garden there is an exceeding fine echo. For I heard a certain Frenchman who sung very melodiously with curious quavers, sing with such admirable art, that upon the resounding of the echo there seemed three to sound together."

In the gardens of Fontainebleau he saw the celebrated fountains : statues perched on artificial rocks, dolphins' heads and scallop shells spouting waters—intricate "water works" such as were the craze of French fashionable society :

" In one of the gardens there is another stately font, in whose middle there is another excellent artificial rock with a representation of moss, and many such other things as pertain to a natural rock. At the top of it there is represented in brass the image of Romulus very largely made, lying side-long and leaning upon one of his elbows. Under one of his legs is carved the she wolf, with Romulus and Remus very little, like sucklings, sucking at her teats. Also at the four sides of this rock there are four swans made in brass, which do continually spout out water, and at the four corners of the font there are four curious scallop shells, made very largely, whereon the water doth continually flow."



From Fontainebleau he travelled south to Lyons, by Montargis, Nevers, Moulins, and St. Saphorine de Lay, through a rich, fertile country abounding in rye and walnut trees, vineyards, "oxen and kine," where from time to time the sight of the rotting bodies of robbers and murderers reminded the traveller of the lurking dangers of the roads :

"A little on this side of Montargis I saw a very doleful and lamentable spectacle : the bones and ragged fragments of clothes of a certain murderer remaining on a wheel, whereon most murderers are executed : the bones were miserably broken asunder, and dispersed abroad upon the wheel in divers places."

A little way beyond Moulins he came upon an even more gruesome exhibition :

"... in this space I saw nothing but one very rueful and tragical object : ten men hanging in their clothes upon a goodly gallows made of freestone about a mile beyond Moulins, whose bodies were consumed to nothing, only their bones and ragged fitters<sup>1</sup> of their clothes remained."

Beneath the appearance of splendour and prosperity the villainous underworlds of bandits and vagabonds was usually apparent. In the "ducal and episcopal" city of Nevers, remarkable for its turreted palace, its cathedral with tombs of jasper, marble and alabaster, the streets were full of wild and sinister gipsies :

"I never saw so many roguish Egyptians together in any one place in all my life as in Nevers, where there was a great multitude of men, women and children of them that disguise their faces, as our counterfeit western Egyptians in England. For both their hair and their faces looked so black, as if they were raked out of hell, and sent into the world by great Beelzebub, to terrify and astonish mortal men : their men are very ruffians and swash-bucklers, having exceeding long hair curled, and swords or other weapons by their sides. Their women also suffer their hair to hang loosely about their shoulders, whereon some I saw dancing in the streets, and singing lascivious vain songs ; whereby they draw many flocks of the foolish citizens about them."

But the inns, frequented by travelling noblemen with their jesters and musicians, were places of security, entertainment, and glamorous social life. Coryate reached the "Inn of the Three Kings," in Lyons, the day after the Earl of Essex, with his numerous attendants, had left. While he was staying there, however, a very grand French gentleman, a "Monsieur de Breues," once ambassador in that mysterious city, Constantinople, the gateway to the fabulous East, arrived for a night on his way to Rome. He

<sup>1</sup> fitters : remnants.

was accompanied by "a great troop of gallant gentlemen," a "black Moor jester"—a "mad conceited fellow, and very merry"—and a scholarly Turk, with whom Coryate passed a most interesting evening conversing in Latin on religion, and learning about that most formidable monarch of the time, reputed greater than the Roman Emperors: the Sultan of Turkey. Another evening was enlivened by the arrival of a gay party of young French noblemen:

"At mine inn there lay the Saturday night, being the fourth of June, a worthy young nobleman of France of two and twenty years old, who was brother to the Duke of Guise and Knight of Malta. He had passing fine music at supper, and after supper he and his companions being gallant lusty gentlemen, danced chorantoes and lavaltoes in the court."

*Sir Robert Dallington*<sup>1</sup>: *A Method for Travell: Showed by taking the view of France as it stood in the yeare of our Lord 1598.* (Pub. 1606.)

Robert Dallington, a spoil-sport Norfolk schoolmaster who travelled through France a few years before Coryate, studying government and administration, manners and customs, strongly disapproved of the carefree disposition of the people. The French, it seems, had already acquired that reputation for flightiness, flashiness, grubbiness, and insincerity, which has remained one of the most tedious of English legends. They were extravagantly addicted to sport, complains Dallington, especially tennis, which he regarded as a menace to the nation as grave as beer-drinking in England:

"I am now by order to speak of his exercises, wherein, methinks, the Frenchman is very immoderate, especially in those which are somewhat violent; for ye may remember, ye have seen them play sets at Tennis in the heat of summer, and height of the day, when others were scarce able to stir out of doors. This immoderate play in this unseasonable time, together with their intemperate drinking and feeding, is the only cause, that here ye see them generally itchy and scabbed, some of them in so foul a sort, as they are unfit for any honest table. . . .

"As for the exercise of Tennis play, which I above remembered, it is more here used, than in all Christendom besides; whereof may witness the infinite number of tennis courts throughout the land, insomuch as ye cannot find the little burgade, or town in France, that hath not one or more of them. Here are, as you see, three-score in Orleans, and I know not how many hundred there be in Paris: but of this I am sure, that if there were in other places the like proportion, ye should have two tennis courts for

<sup>1</sup> *Sir Robert Dallington* (1561-1637). A schoolmaster in Norfolk, in 1624 he was appointed master of Charterhouse and knighted the same year.

every one church through France. Methinks it is also strange, how apt they be here to play well, that ye would think they were born with rackets in their hands, even the children themselves manage them so well, and some of their women also, as we observed at Blois.

"There is one great abuse in this exercise, that the magistrates do suffer every poor citizen, and artificer to play thereat, who spendeth that on the holyday, at tennis, which he got the whole week, for the keeping of his poor family. A thing more hurtful than our ale-houses in England, though the one and the other be bad enough. And of this I dare assure you, that of this sort of poor people, there be more tennis players in France, then ale-drinkers, or malt-worms (as they call them) with us."

In war, the French were dashing but unreliable : in private life, equally disappointing :

"For ye must observe of the French, that he entereth a Country like thunder, and vanisheth out again like smoke: he resembleth the wasp, who after the first stroke, loseth her sting, and can hurt no more.

"He sheweth thus his lightness and inconstancy, not only in matters of service and war . . . but also even in other his actions and carriages: but in nothing more, than in his familiarity, with whom a stranger cannot so soon be off his horse, but he will be acquainted; nor so soon in his chamber, but the other like an ape will be on his shoulder: and as suddenly and without cause ye shall lose him also. A childish humour, to be won with as little as an apple, and lost with less than a not."<sup>1</sup>

He agrees with Theophrastus that the typical Frenchman was dirty and not ashamed of it :

"He is also such a one, as Theophrastus calls, . . . . uncleanly, . . . . Who being leprous and scabby, and wearing long unpared nails, thrusts himself into company, and says, those diseases come to him by kind; for both his father and his grandfather were subject unto them." . . .

Worst of all, he was a "craker"—a boaster, much given to showing off :

"This is he that comes to the Tennis Court, throws his purse full of coin at the line, which giveth a sound, as if there were no less than thirty or forty crowns, when as sometimes by mischance, we have discovered that it was nothing, but paper and a few sols, and doubles of brass, that made it so swell, in all scarce eighteen pence sterling. . . .

"Such a one was the gallant, of whom ye told me this other day, who in the midst of his discourse with you and other gentlemen, suddenly turns back to his lackey, 'Fetch me,' saith he, 'my horologe, clock, it lies in my lodging in such or such a place, near such or such a jewell.' The *lalerio*

<sup>1</sup> not : negation, refusal.

returns with a *non est inuentus*. My French gallant straight bethinks himself that it is in his pocket (which he knew well enough before) which presently he pulls out, not so much to show how the time passeth, (whereof he takes little care) as the curiousness of the work, and the beauty of the case, whereof he is not a little enamoured."

*John Evelyn*<sup>1</sup> : *Diary*.

John Evelyn, visiting France in 1644, found little or nothing to criticise. One of the most cultured of all English travellers, he saw only the France that pleased him; and a wonderful France it was, glowing in the gorgeous civilisation of renaissance Italy, all new and magnificent: the new palaces and villas of white freestone which had sprung up all over the country, decorated in the ornate Italian taste with gilding and carving, statues and painted ceilings, damask and velvet, jasper and inlaid marbles; filled with modern pictures by Poussin and Rubens, and works of the previous century by Raphael and Leonardo, Titian, Veronese and Correggio, and surrounded by gardens, which, more than architecture, sculpture and painting, were the glory of seventeenth-century France. Paradises they seemed, where nature was happily coerced into elegance, abounding in "exotic plants," "precious shrubs" and "rare fruits," "noble hedges of pomegranates," labyrinths of cypresses, orangeries, *citronnières*, fish-ponds, aviaries, grottos, alleys, perspectives, painted *trompe d'oeils*, statues, lakes, cascades, and most important of all, fountains, the most intricate water-works imaginable, the triumph of contemporary mechanical skill.

Science, the exciting novelty of the period, was put to the most frivolous and decorative uses. The sewage lay in the streets—the fact that Paris was built in a hollow "rendered some places very dirty," and made it "smell as if sulphur were mingled with mud,"—yet the jettos in the gardens of Fontainebleau soared into airy *fleurs-de-lis*, at the Maison Rouge water shot fifty feet high with the sound of tempests and guns, and at the palace of St. Germain the story of Perseus and Andromeda was represented in illuminated water cast from fountains in a torchlit cave. Science was indeed a toy of the rich, an amusement of the nobility. The depraved and exquisite Duke of Orleans, when he was not plotting against his brother,

<sup>1</sup> *John Evelyn* (1620-1706), author of the celebrated diary; a cultured and sophisticated gentleman, typical of his period in his enthusiasm for natural history and the artistic applications of science. A sincere but not heroic royalist, he avoided fighting in the Civil War by touring France and Italy. He was one of the promoters of the Royal Society (founded 1660). Gardening was his favourite occupation; his beautiful garden at Sayes Court, Deptford, was badly damaged by Peter the Great who rented the house while he was learning shipbuilding in England in 1697-98. Besides his diary, he wrote a variety of books on horticulture and scientific subjects, among them *Fumifugium, or the inconvenience of the Aer and Smoak of London dissipated*, in which he advocated the planting of sweet-smelling forest trees in London to purify the air.

Louis XIII, devoted himself to natural history. Gardening delighted him almost as much as political intrigue: after the pleasures of conspiracy—conspiracy for its own sake, without prospect of success, but accompanied by the satisfaction of betraying his accomplices—after these things he loved plants. His flower garden, according to Evelyn, cost him many thousands of pistoles: the paintings of his specimens, for which he employed the best available artists, passed at his death to Louis XIV and formed the nucleus of the famous royal collection.<sup>1</sup> The influence of this blackguardly prince was all for the advancement of science and learning: following his example, men of taste, besides buying pictures and jewels, collected tulips and anemones, shells from the East Indies, insects and butterflies, and commissioned distinguished artists to record their most precious specimens.

Paris, the home of these wealthy connoisseurs, Evelyn considered in spite of its smells "one of the most gallant cities in the world." Like Coryate, he admired the stately new bridge, the Pont Neuf, with its more than life-size statue of Henry the Great on horseback, and the mountebanks who loitered there to entertain the public; the new Jesuit church in the Rue St. Antoine he thought "one of the most perfect pieces of architecture in Europe"; he visited a shop called Noah's Ark which sold "all curiosities, Indian or European, . . . as cabinets, shells, ivory, porcelain, dried fishes, insects, birds, pictures, and a thousand exotic extravagancies," bought works of the classic poets from the King's printing press in the Louvre, and watched the goldsmiths, painters, statuaries and architects who lived under the long gallery turning out their boundless supply of sumptuous new work.

Most splendid of all the new palaces was the Luxembourg, recently built by Mari de Medici:

"I went to see more exactly the rooms of the fine Palace of Luxembourg, one of the most noble and finished piles that is to be seen. . . . taking it with its garden and all its accomplishments. The gallery is of the painting of Rubens, being the history of the Foundress's Life, rarely designed; at the end of it is the Duke of Orleans' library, well furnished with excellent books, all bound in maroquin and gilded, the valance of the shelves being of green velvet, fringed with gold. In the cabinet joining to it are only the smaller volumes, with six cabinets of medals, and an excellent collection of shells and agates, whereof some are prodigiously rich. The Duke<sup>2</sup>, being very learned in medals and plants, nothing of that kind escapes him. . . .

<sup>1</sup> This collection was continued until 1905, twenty paintings of plants and animals being added each year. The famous botanical artists G. van Spaendonck and Pierre Joseph Redouté, "*le Raphael des fleurs*," contributed to it during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. At the Revolution it was transferred to the Jardin des Plantes.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Orleans.



"Towards the grotto and the stables, within a wall, is a garden of choice flowers, in which the Duke spends many thousand pistoles. In sum, nothing is wanting to render this palace and gardens perfectly beautiful and magnificent; nor is it one of the least diversions to see the number of persons of quality, citizens and strangers, who frequent it, and to whom all access is freely permitted, so that you see some walks and retirements full of gallants and ladies; in others, melancholy friars; in others, studious scholars; in others, jolly citizens, some sitting or lying on the grass, others running and jumping; some playing at bowls and ball, others dancing and singing; and this all without the least disturbance, by reason of the largeness of the place.

"What is most admirable, you see no gardeners, or men at work, and yet all is kept in such exquisite order, as if they did nothing else but work; it is so early in the morning, that all is dispatched and done without the least confusion."

On the following day he visited one of the great collectors :

"The next morning, I was had by a friend to the garden of Monsieur Morine, who, from being an ordinary gardener, is become one of the most skilful and curious persons in France for his rare collection of shells, flowers, and insects.

"His garden is of an exact oval figure, planted with cypress, cut flat and set out as even as a wall: the tulips, anemones, ranunculuses, crocuses, etc., are held to be of the rarest, and draw all admirers of that kind to his house during the season. He lived in a kind of hermitage at one side of his garden, where his collection of porcelain and coral, whereof one is carved into a large crucifix, is much esteemed. He has also books of prints, by Albert Dürer, van Leyden, Callot, etc. His collection of all sorts of insects, especially of butterflies, is most curious, these he spreads and so medicates, that no corruption invading them, he keeps them in drawers, so placed as to represent a beautiful piece of tapestry.

"He shewed me remarks which he made on their propagation, which he promised to publish. Some of these, as also of his best flowers, he caused to be painted in miniature by rare hands, and some in oil."

Another day was spent admiring the fantastic gardens of Richelieu's villa at Ruel, and of the royal palace at St. Germain :

"From hence, about a league farther, we went to see Cardinal Richelieu's villa, at Ruel. The house is small, but fairly built, in form of a castle, moated round. . . . But, though the house is not of the greatest, the gardens about it are so magnificent, that I doubt whether Italy has any exceeding it for all rarities of pleasure. The garden nearest the pavilion is a parterre, having in the midst divers noble brass statues, perpetually spouting water into an ample basin, with other figures of the same metal ;



but what is most admirable is the vast enclosure, and variety of ground, in the large garden, containing vineyards, corn-fields, meadows, groves (whereof one is of perennial greens), and walks of vast length, so accurately kept and cultivated, that nothing can be more agreeable. On one of these walks, within a square of tall trees, is a basilisk of copper, which, managed by the fountaineer, casts water near sixty feet high, and will of itself move round so swiftly, that one can hardly escape wetting. This leads to the *Citronière*, which is a noble conserve of all those rarities ; and at the end of it is the Arch of Constantine, painted on a wall in oil, as large as the real one in Rome, so well done, that even a man skilled in painting, may mistake it for stone and sculpture. The sky and hills, which seem to be between the arches, are so natural, that swallows and other birds, thinking to fly through, have dashed themselves against the wall. I was infinitely taken with this agreeable cheat. At the further part of this walk is that plentiful, though artificial cascade, which rolls down a very steep declivity, and over the marble steps and basins, with an astonishing noise and fury ; each basin hath a jetto in it, flowing like sheets of transparent glass, especially that which rises over the great shell of lead, from whence it glides silently down a channel through the middle of a spacious gravel walk, terminating in a grotto. . . . We then saw a large and very rare grotto of shell-work, in the shape of satyrs, and other wild fancies : in the middle stands a marble table, on which a fountain plays in divers forms of glasses, cups, crosses, fans, crowns, etc. Then the fountaineer represented a shower of rain from the top, met by small jets from below. At going out, two extravagant musketeers shot us with a stream of water from their musket barrels. . . . The viewing of this paradise made us late at St. Germain."

He then went to St. Germain :

"The first building of this palace is of Charles V. . . . but Francis I (that true virtuoso) made it complete ; speaking as to the style of magnificence then in fashion, which was with too great a mixture of the Gothic. . . . The new castle is at some distance, divided from this by a court, of a lower, but more modern design, built by Henry IV. To this belongs six terraces, built of brick and stone, descending in cascades towards the river, cut out of the natural hill, having under them goodly vaulted galleries ; of these, four have subterranean grots and rocks, there are represented several objects in the manner of scenes and other motions, by force of water, shown by the light of torches only ; amongst these, is Orpheus with his music, and the animals, which dance after his harp ; in the second, is the King and Dolphin ; in the third, is Neptune sounding his trumpet, his chariot drawn by sea-horses ; in the fourth, the story of Perseus and Andromeda ; mills, hermitages, men fishing ; birds chirping ; and many other devices."

One of the most remarkable of the private palaces was that of the Comte de Liancourt, which contained, as well as magnificent pictures, some most

up-to-date "inventions": reflected lighting, a puppet theatre, and a *tromp d'œil* which cunningly enlarged the little town garden:

"I. March. I went to see the Count de Liancourt's Palace in the Rue de Seine, which is well built. Towards his study and bedchamber joins a little garden, which, though very narrow, by the addition of a well-painted perspective, is to appearance greatly enlarged; to this there is another part, supported by arches, in which runs a stream of water, rising in the aviary, out of a statue, and seeming to flow for some miles, by being artificially continued in the painting, when it sinks down at the wall. It is a very agreeable deceit. At the end of this garden is a little theatre, made to change with divers pretty scenes, and the stage so ordered, with figures of men and women painted on light boards, and cut out, and, by a person who stands underneath, made to act as if they were speaking, by guiding them, and reciting words in different tones, as the parts require. We were led into a round cabinet, where was a neat invention for reflecting lights, by lining divers sconces with thin shining plates of gilded copper.

"In one of the rooms of state was an excellent painting of Poussin, being a satyr kneeling; over the chimney, the Coronation of the Virgin, by Paolo Veronese; . . ."

Paintings by Raphael, Bassano, Paul Brill, van Leyden and Leonardo da Vinci were also included in this nobleman's collection.

Evelyn carried his own world with him during his journey across France. Everywhere he saw gardens, fountains, and palaces; the "horrid and solitary" forest of Fontainebleau, "encompassed with hideous rocks," was but a passing annoyance; the next day he was in the palace, the day after viewing a collection of Raphaels in a country house belonging to a painter. All the roads were good, paved in "small square freestone"; nothing more distressing was encountered than a few regrettable "Gothic" buildings; the approach to Marseilles was incomparably lovely:

"We had a most delicious journey to Marseilles, through a country sweetly declining to the south and Mediterranean coasts, full of vineyards and olive-yards, orange trees, myrtles, pomegranates, and the like sweet plantations, to which belong pleasantly situated villas to the number of above 1500, built all of freestone, and in prospect showing as if they were so many heaps of snow dropped out of the clouds amongst those perennial greens."

Even the galleys in the harbour of Marseilles were beautiful; the slaves proved themselves admirable musicians, and when they rowed out to sea in their chains under the lash of a "sadistic overseer" they made an impression not unpleasantly macabre:

"We went then to visit the galleys, being about twenty-five in number;

the Captain of the Galley Royal gave us most courteous entertainment in his cabin, the slaves in the interim playing both loud and soft music very rarely. Then he showed us how he commanded their motions with a nod, and his whistle making them row out. The spectacle was to me new and strange, to see so many hundreds of miserable naked persons, their heads being shaven close and having only high red bonnets, a pair of coarse canvas drawers, their whole backs and legs naked, doubly chained about their middle and legs, in couples, and made fast to their seats, and all commanded in a trice by an imperious and cruel seaman. . . . The galley was richly carved and gilded, and most of the rest were very beautiful, . . . The rising-forward and falling-back at their oar, is a miserable spectacle, and the noise of their chains, with the roaring of the beaten waters, has something of strange and fearful in it to one unaccustomed to it."

*Sir John Lauder, Lord Fountainhall*<sup>1</sup> : *Journals*, 1665-1676.

John Lauder, later Lord Fountainhall, visiting France some twenty years after Evelyn, travelled without any exceptional privileges or grand connections. The son of a Scottish merchant, he was sent abroad by his father as a youth of nineteen to study law in the foreign schools in preparation for the bar. The "force of money," it is true, "unlocked and cast open" the gates of several of the great palaces, where this raw boy gazed in naïve stupefaction at the pictures and waterworks, the gilded and painted ceilings which dazzled his eyes by their brilliance, and the incredibly rich furniture inlaid with marble and precious stones; but the greater part of his time was spent in bourgeois households in Orleans and Poitiers. Here he saw the other side of the *grand siècle*, ignored and possibly unsuspected by Evelyn; the France of marvels and miracles, tortures, superstitions and witchcraft, where the itinerant vendors swarmed the streets as in the squalling oriental towns of today, where holy processions were a continual diversion, where the long evenings were passed recounting the legends of St. Radegonde and St. Hilary, anecdotes about Columbus, madmen and murderers, and the most popular public entertainments were the gruesome feats of "charlatans" and mountebanks.

As a militant Protestant Lauder also naturally devoted much of his time to religion. His attitude can be judged from the first entry in his journal after crossing the channel :

"About five in the morning we landed in France the land of graven images."

<sup>1</sup> *Sir John Lauder, Lord Fountainhall* (1646-1722). His father was an Edinburgh merchant and baillie. He studied abroad 1665-1667, and became an advocate on his return. His subsequent career was successful and distinguished: he was knighted, and later inherited a barony from his father; as a member of the Scottish parliament he distinguished himself "as a good patriot and true Protestant" by his defence of the Penal Laws against Popery.

Wherever he went he indefatigably attended ceremonies, visited monasteries, listened to sermons, and engaged himself in those religious arguments which seem to have been as inescapable in his period as political arguments are in ours. Yet in spite of his contempt for popery he was immediately charmed by France. Even the journey to Paris was enjoyable :

" We chanced to lay a night at a pretty village called Birny, where my chamber was contigue to a spacious pleasant wood that abounded with nightingales, small birds to look upon ; who with the melodiousness of their singing did put sleep quite from me."

In Paris he saw the Louvre, which he thought, when completed, would outshine even that most renowned of palaces, the seraglio of the " Grand Signior," the Sultan of Turkey :

" I saw also that vast stupendous building, the Louvre, which hath laid many kings in their graves, and yet stands unfinished ; give<sup>1</sup> all be brought to a close that is in their intentions I think the Grand Seignieur's seraglio shall bear no proportion to it. All we saw of it was the extrinsecks, excepting only the king's comedy house which the force of money unlocked and cast open ; which truly was a very pleasant sight, nothing to be seen there but that which by reason of gilding glittered like gold. But the thing that most commended it was its rare, curious and most conceity machines : there they had the skies, boats, dragons, wildernesses, the sun itself so artificially represented that under night with candle-light nothing could appear liker them."

At Orleans he observed one of the crazily ingenious scientific practices of the period :

" We remember that in our observations at Orleans we marked that the violent heats here procures terrible thunders and lightning, and because that are several times of bad consequence, the thunder lighting sometimes on the houses, sometimes on the steeples and bells, levelling all to the ground, that they may evite the danger as much as they can they set all the bells of the city on work gin goon.<sup>2</sup>

The bell ringing, it was argued, served to disperse the " thickness," " impuritude " and " crassitude " of the air which was thought to be the cause of the thunder. In Italy, notes Lauder, where thunderstorms were frequent and formidable, " they are very careful not only to cause ring all their bells, but also to shoot off their greatest cannons and pieces of ordonnances. . . . "

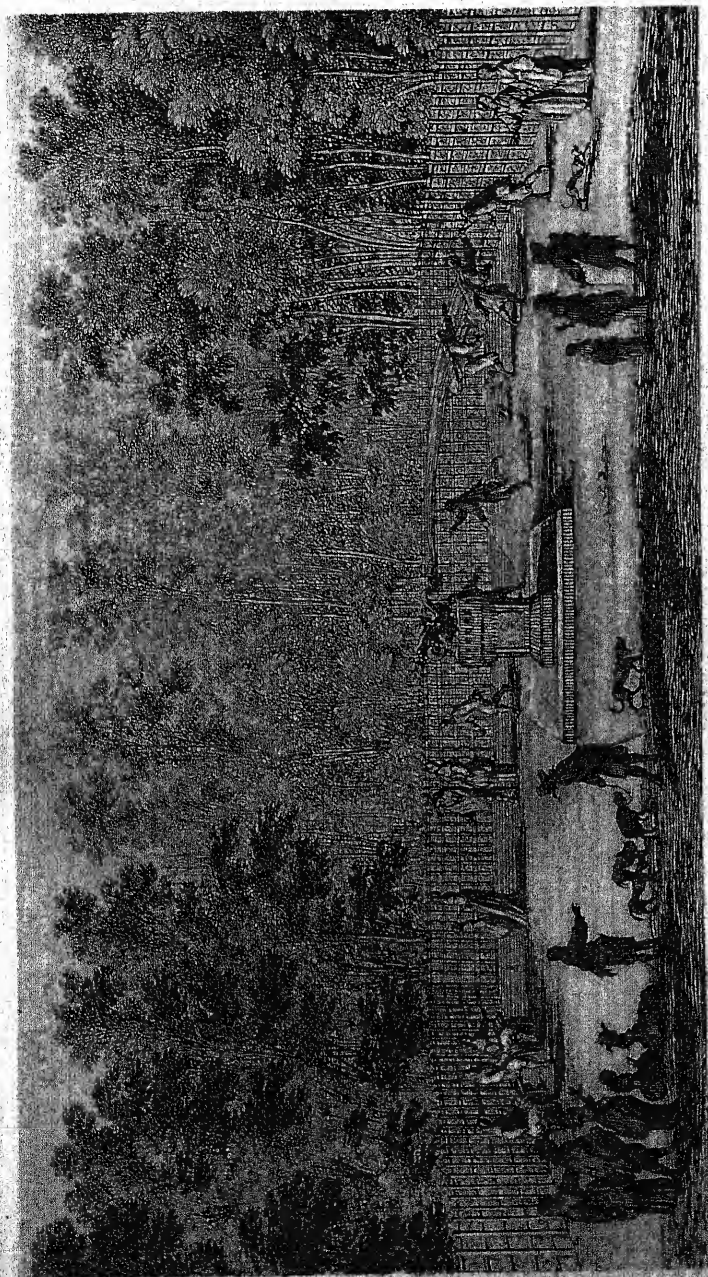
In Poitiers he saw the remains of an extraordinary monster in the ruined *palais de justice* :

" I went also and saw the palais where their avocats used to plead, but

<sup>1</sup> give : if.

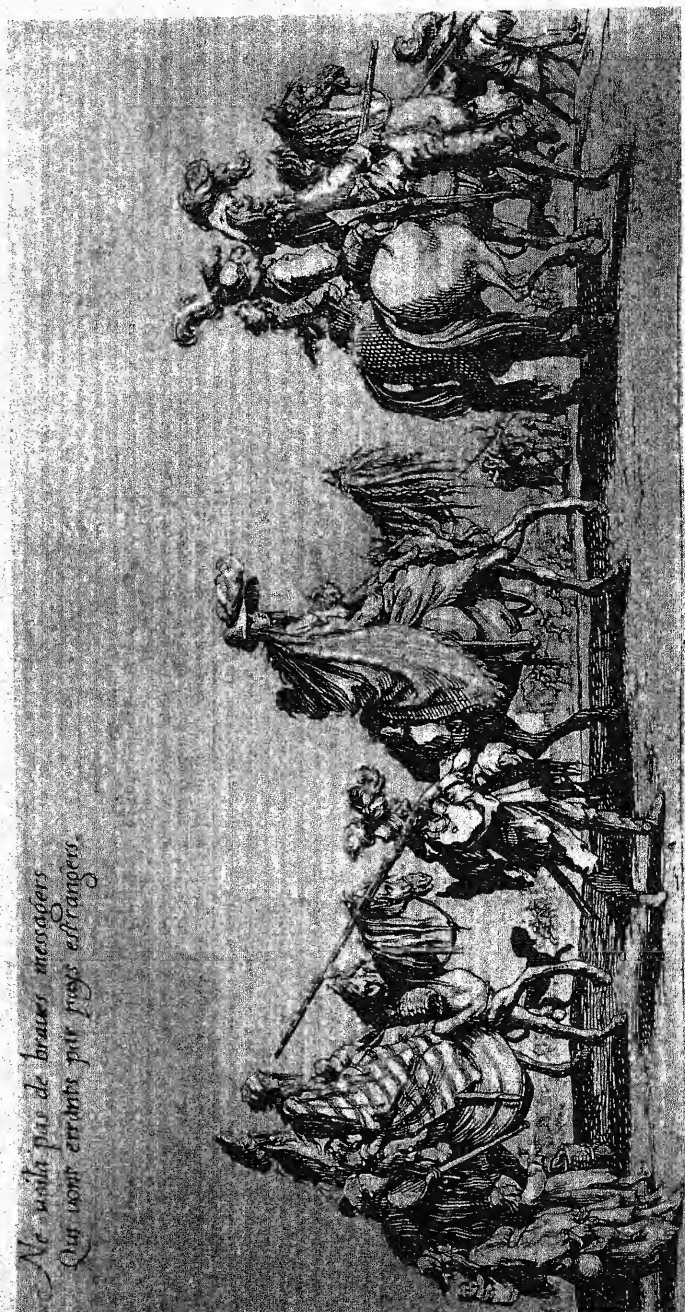
<sup>2</sup> in goon : ding dong.





The basilisk fountain in Cardinal Richelieu's garden at Ruel.  
*From a contemporary engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE II



A troop of gypsies.  
From an engraving by Jacques Callot. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.



had fallen down by mere antiquity about three months before I came to Poitiers. . . . There hinges bound upon the wall with iron chains the relics of a dead hideous crocodile, which, tho' it be infinitely diminished from what it was (it being some hundred years since it was slain), yet its monstrously great with a vast throat. This, they say, was found in one of their prisons, which I saw also. On a time a number of prisoners being put in for some offences, on the morrow as some came to see the prisoners not one of them could be found, it having eaten and devoured them every one. Not knowing how to be rid of this troublesome beast no man dared attempt to kill it, they proffered one who was condemned to die for some crime, his life, if he killed it. Whereupon he went to the prison with a well charged pistol, as it seemingly being very hungry was advancing furiously to worry him he shot in the white spot of its breast where its not so well armed with scales as elsewhere and slew it and won his life.

"I enquiring how that beast might come there it seems most probable that it was engendered *ex putri materia*, as the philosophers speak, tho' I could hardly well believe that the sun could give life to such a monstrous big creature as it."

During his stay at Poitiers the most exciting event was the escape from prison of a murderer, whose weird and foolhardy behaviour apparently hypnotised the townspeople into letting him go unhindered :

"A gentleman accused of several murders and imprisoned escaped in women's clothes about the gloaming, whom we saw pass through the street, giving all ground of suspicion by the terror and amazement he was in ; letting a scarf fall in one part, his napkin in another, his gown *taille*<sup>1</sup> fell down in a third. Yet none seized on him. At the port<sup>2</sup> of the town he had a horse waiting for him on which he escaped."

Puppet plays and performing rats diverted him for an evening :

"O brave consequence, I went one night to the *Marcher Vieux* and saw some puppy plays, as also rats whom they had learned to play tricks on a tow."<sup>3</sup>

But the best entertainment was provided by one of the popular mountebanks who arrived while he was staying in the town.

"There came a charlatan or mountebank to Poitiers the September we was there, whose foolies we went whiles to see. The most part of the French charletans and druggists when they come to a town to gain that he get them themselves a better name, and that they may let the people see that they are not cheaters as the world terms them, they go to all the physicians, apothecaries and chirurgeons of the town and profers to drink any poison

<sup>1</sup> *taille* : waist or bodice.

<sup>2</sup> *port* : gate.

<sup>3</sup> *tow* : rope.

that they like to mix him, since he hath a antidote against any poison whatsoever.

"A mountebank at Montpelliers having made this overture, the potingers<sup>1</sup> most unnaturally and wickedly made him a poisonable potion stuffed with sulphur, quick silver, a wicked thing they call *l'eau forte*, and diverse others burning corrosive ingredients to drink. He being confident of his antidote, he would drink it and apply his antidote in the view of all the people upon the stage. He had not well drunk it when by the strength of the ingredients he sunk all most dead upon the scaffold or stage; he suddenly made his recourse to his antidote which he had in his hand; but all would not do, fore half an hour it bereaved him of his life.

"At the Marcher Vieux beyond our expectations we saw one of our fellows eat the Viper head and all. The master stripped it as a man would do an eel, and clasped it siker<sup>2</sup> within a inch of its neck. The fellow took the head of it in his mouth and zest<sup>3</sup> in a instant bit it off its neck and over his throat with it, rubbing his throat grievously for fear that it stake there. He had great difficulty of getting it over, and with the time it had been in his mouth his head swelled as big as two heads. The master immediately took a glass half full of wine, in which he wrang the blood and bowels of the headless body of the viper and cause him to drink it also, breaking the glass in which he drank it to pieces on the stage, causing sweep all very diligently away that it might do no harm. Immediately on the fellow drinking of it he had ready a cup of contrepoison, which he caused him to drink, then giving a great weighty cloak about his shoulders sent him to keep himself warm before a great fire."

During the many evenings when there was nothing to do but sit at home, the conversation ran on witchcraft and magic :

"On a night falling in discourse with some two or three Frenchmen of magic and things of that nature, I perceived it was a thing very frequent in France, tho' yet more frequent in Italy. They told me several stories of some that practised sorcery, for the most part priests who are strangely given to this curiosity. They told me of one who lived at Chatelraut, who, when he pleased to recreate himself, would sit down and set his charms at work, he made several, both men and women, go mother naked through the town, some chanting and singing, others at every gutter they came to taking up the goupings<sup>4</sup> of filth and besmiring themselves with it. He hath made some also leap on horseback with their face to the horse tail, and take it in their teeth, and in this posture ride thorow all the town."

Whoever would know the rest of their conversations, concerning the

<sup>1</sup> potingers : apothecaries.

<sup>2</sup> siker : firmly.

<sup>3</sup> zest : just.

<sup>4</sup> goupings : handfuls.

bewitching of bridegrooms, the many varieties of pears, Louis XIV's skill in playing the kettle drums, "the possessed convent of religious women called *les diablesses de Loudon*, vice in Rome, oaths, enigmas, Jesuit punishments, and an assortment of rude jokes, must read in full this enchanting journal.

The civilisation which glowed so magnificently above the myths and wonders and brutalities of seventeenth-century France, the laboriously ornate, half-Italian, baroque civilisation admired by Evelyn, became acclimatised, was developed and refined, during the following century, into something more poised, delicate, scintillating, and essentially French. No traveller was better able to enjoy this lustrous world than Horace Walpole, ultra-sophisticated arbiter of taste, frequenter of courts and the most closed society, who in 1775, elderly, exacting, a connoisseur of pleasure, saw Paris at the peak of its pre-revolution splendour, and reported his visit to the Countess of Upper Ossory in a series of gracefully malicious letters.

*Horace Walpole*<sup>1</sup>; *Letters to the Countess of Upper Ossory*. (1775.)

*Paris, August 23rd, 1775.*

"I should have a heart of adamant, madam, if I was not become a perfect Frenchman. Nothing could exceed my reception. I do not talk only of my dear old friend, whose kindness augments with the century. The Maréchaux de Luxembourg and Mirepoix came to Paris to see me; the Duchesse de la Valière met me in the outward room and embraced me. I am smeared with red, like my own crest the Saracen, and, in short, have been so kissed on both cheeks, that had they been as large as Madame de Virri's, they would have lost leather; but enough of vanity. I have landed in a moment of pomp and diversion. Madame Clothilde was married on Monday morning, and at night was the banquet royal,—the finest sight sur la terre,—I believe, for I did not see it. I husband my pleasures and my person, and do not expose my wrinkles au grand jour. Last night I did limp to the *Bal Paré*, and as I am the hare with many real friends was placed on the banc des ambassadeurs, just behind the royal family. It was in the theatre, the bravest in the universe; and yet taste predominates over expense. What I have to say, I can tell your ladyship in a word, for it is impossible to see anything but the Queen! Hebes and Floras, and Helenes and Graces, are street-walkers to her. She is a statue of beauty, when standing or sitting; grace itself when she moves. She was dressed in silver, scattered over with laurierroses; few diamonds, and feathers much lower than the monument. They say she does not dance in time, but then it is wrong to dance in time. . . .

"The new Princess of Piedmont has a glorious face, the rest about the

<sup>1</sup> *Horace Walpole* (1717-97). These extracts are taken from his letters to the Countess of Ossory written between 1769 and 1797.

dimensions of the last Lord Holland, which does not do so well in a stiff-bodied gown. . . .

"There were but eight minuets, and, except the Queen and Princesses, only eight lady dancers. I was not so struck by the dancing as I expected, except with a *pas de deux* by the Marquis de Noialles and Madame Holstein. For beauty, I saw none, or the Queen effaced all the rest. After the minuets were French country dances, much encumbered by the long trains, longer tresses and hoops. As the weather was excessively sultry, I do not think the clothes, though of gauze and the lightest silks, had much taste. In the intervals of dancing, baskets of peaches, China oranges (a little out of season), biscuits, ices, and wine and water, were presented to the royal family and dancers. The ball lasted but just two hours. The monarch did not dance, but for the first rounds of the minuets even the Queen does not turn her back on him ; yet her behaviour is as easy as divine. Tonight is a banquet for three hundred persons, given by the Count de Verri, and on Friday he gives a *bal masqué* to the universe in a *Colisée* erected on purpose. I have excused myself from the first, as I have no curiosity to see how three hundred persons eat, but shall go for a moment to the other fête, as nothing but dominoes are used, except the grand habit for the dancers."

Sept. 9th.

. . . "Lord ! how I could brag if I would ! Madame de B. told me last night that I had made the *conquête* of her daughter-in-law, la Comtesse Emilie. I am going to drink tea with her under a bosquet de plumes this evening, in the mother's English garden at Auteuil, and I am to sup at St. Ouen with Madame Necker, who is reckoned to have condescended more towards me than to any *bel esprit* or *philosophe* since David Hume. It is true, I have hurt myself by speaking a little irreverently of Monsieur Thomas, and by laughing when she told me that Bossuet and the writers under Louis Quatorze had only opened the channels of eloquence which the authors of the present age had made into a perfect basin—but I am always kicking down the pail of my fortune by some indiscretion or other ! Well ! they are a charming people, and I cannot think of leaving them yet. In England I fancied I was within a furlong of threescore, but it is so English to grow old ! The French are Strulbergs improved. After ninety they have no more caducity or distempers, but set out on a new career. Madame du Deffand and I set out last Sunday at seven in the evening, to go fifteen miles to a ball, and came back after supper ; and another night, because it was but one in the morning when she brought me home, she ordered the coachman to make the tour of the Quais, and drive gently because it was so early.

"Do you think, madam, I will come home and have the gout, when I feel myself as young as Nestor when he had just tapped his second century ?

These good folks push the delusion of life to the last moment. A gentleman here was dying ; his wife sent for the notary to make his will ; and when it was done, lest the poor man should have a codicil more of affection to make, they supped by his bedside. The notary, tout plein d'attentions, filled a bumper and said, '*Madame, a la santé de notre aimable agonizant.*'

"Pray tell Lord Ossory, madam, that he would not know Paris, it is so improved in buildings and in good architecture, The Hotel de la Monnaie on the Quai is very handsome. The Ecole Militaire would be beautiful if the columns were not as short as they are long. I have not yet had time to see the Ecole de Chirurgie, which they say is beautiful, nor the Portail de St. Genevieve, nor the Hôtel du Chatelet, nor the Petite Maison of the Princess of Monaco, but shall next week. There are twenty new streets that are lovely, with arcades and gardens. Mad. de Mirepoix's house, where I supped last night, is charming. It is on the old Boulevard, the trees of which shade the windows, with the perspective of a street in front. The *salle-à-manger* is all of stucco, highly polished, representing white marble with panels of verd antique. The grand-cabinet is round, all white and gold and glasses, with curtains in festoons of silk *flambé* ; and illuminated by four branches of lilies of ormolu, each as loose and graceful as that which Guido's angel holds in the salutation at the Carmelites, which alas ! they have just repainted, as they are serving the whole cloister at the Chartreuse. While we at supper with all the windows open, and les Gardes du Roi playing to us, your ladyship I suppose was hovering over a fire. It has been sultry ever since I came hither ; the last five days like the torrid zone, and lightning as cheap as gunpowder."

Oct. 3rd.

"You may be cutting down palm branches, madam, to strew the way, for I am coming. The tempter took me up into a mountain, and shewed me all Mariette's collection of prints and drawings, which are to be sold in November, and offered me my choice of them if I would stay. I resisted, and prefer myself infinitely to Scipio : he might have had fifty other women ; but where is there another room full of Raphaels, Corregios, Parmegianos, and Michael Angelos ?"

*Philip Thicknesse*<sup>1</sup>; *A year's journey through France and Port of Spain.* (1775.)

Horace Walpole forgot his gout, Madame du Deffand her blindness ; in this supremely civilised world, the crude physical facts of youth and good

<sup>1</sup> *Philip Thicknesse* (1719-92), a cantankerous cultured gentleman, spent his life writing, travelling and quarrelling. As a young man he visited Georgia,



looks, like illness and death, were no longer feared or respected; the pleasure of life was stretched to the utmost limit, nobody thought of dying. Yet death, when it came, could be barbarous and disgusting. Philip Thicknesse, a prudish and rather morbid traveller, visiting France the same year as Walpole, seems to have been more impressed by the modes of death than of living. In Paris, the city of balls and banquets, gardens and arcades, the corpses rotted in open pits :

" I am astonished, that where such an infinite number of people live in so small a compass (for Paris is by no means so large as London), that they should suffer the dead to be buried in the manner they do, or within the city. There are several burial pits in Paris, of a prodigious size and depth, in which the dead bodies are laid, side by side, without any earth being put over them till the ground tier is full; then, and not till then, a small layer of earth covers them, and another layer of dead comes on, till by layer upon layer, and dead upon dead, the hole is filled with a mass of human corruption, enough to breed a plague; these places are enclosed, it is true, within high walls; but nevertheless, the air cannot be *improved* by it; and the idea of such an assemblage of putrifying bodies, in one grave, so thinly covered, is very disagreeable. The burials in churches too, often prove fatal to the priests and people who attend; but everybody, and everything in Paris, is so much alive, that not a soul thinks about the dead."

In Dijon, as elsewhere, the centuries-old torture of breaking on the wheel was still a public spectacle :

" Here, I imagined I should be able to bear seeing the execution of a man, whose crimes merited, I thought, the severest punishment. He was broke upon the wheel; so it is called; but the wheel is what the body is fixed upon to be exposed on the high road after the execution. This man's body, however, was burnt. This miserable wretch (a young strong man) was brought in the evening, by a faint torch light, to a chapel near the place of execution, where he might have continued in prayer till midnight; but after one hour spent there, he walked to, and mounted the scaffold, accompanied by his confessor, who with great earnestness continually presented to him, and bade him kiss, the crucifix he carried in his hand. When the prisoner came upon the scaffold, he very willingly laid himself upon his back, and extended his arms and legs over a cross, that was laid flat and fixed fast upon the scaffold for that purpose, and to

Jamaica and the Mediterranean with the army and the marines. He "discovered" Gainsborough and was his patron for twenty years until their friendship was shattered by a row. In the garden of the house he built for himself, St. Catherine's Hermitage, near Bath, he erected the first English monument to Chatterton. Many of his numerous books are on curious subjects; for instance, *An Account of Four Persons starved to death at Ditchworth, Herts*, and *The Automaton Chess Player exposed and detected*, a book on that fascinating mystery of the eighteenth century, the invincible automatic chess player. His book of *Memoires* is rather disappointing.



which he was securely tied by the executioner and his mother, who assisted her son in this horrid business. Part of the cross was cut away, in eight places, so as to leave a hollow vacancy where the blows were to be given, which are, between the shoulder and elbow, elbow and wrist, thigh and knee, and knee and ankle. When the man was securely tied down, the end of a rope which was round his neck, with a running noose, was brought through a hole in and under the scaffold; this was to give the *coup de grace*, after breaking: a *coup* which relieved him, and all the agitated spectators, from an infinite degree of misery, except only, the executioner and his mother, for they both seemed to enjoy the deadly office. When the blows were given, which were made with a heavy piece of iron, in the form of a butcher's cleaver without an edge, the bones of the arms and legs were broke in eight places; at each blow, the sufferer called out, O God! without saying another word, or even uttering a groan. During all this time, the confessor called upon him continually to kiss the cross, and to remember Christ, his Redeemer. Indeed, there was infinite address, as well as piety, in the conduct of the confessor; for he would not permit this miserable wretch to have one moment's reflection about his bodily sufferings, while a matter of so much more importance was depending; but even those eight blows seemed nothing to two dreadful after-claps, for the executioner then untied the body, turned his back upwards, and gave him two blows on the small of the back with the same weapon; and yet even that did not put an end to the life and sufferings of the malefactor! for the finishing stroke was, after all this, done by the halter, and then the body was thrown into a great fire, and consumed to ashes. . . I hope I need not tell you, that I shall never attend another; and would feign have made my escape from this, but it was impossible. . . Now I am sure you will be, as I was, astonished to think, an old woman, the mother of the executioner, should willingly assist in a business of so horrid a nature; and I dare say, you will be equally astonished that the magistrates of the city permitted it."

The administration of justice was not only brutal, but inadequate. Murders on the roads, Thicknesse complains, were frequent, largely because the landlords on whose estate a murder took place were responsible for bringing the criminal to justice, and many were too poor to meet the expenses involved. Only the very great, it appears, benefited from the ancien régime; the minor nobility had little but their pretensions to support them, a number became crooks, tarts, and card-sharpers, and an innocent young man from England had much ado to escape the "baits" laid by these "artful designing wicked men, and profligate, abandoned and prostitute women<sup>1</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> Another English traveller of the period considered that if his young countrymen were duped and rooked in France, it was entirely due to their frivolous and immoderate behaviour. "How frequently," he complained, "did I see

*Tobias Smollett*<sup>1</sup>; *Travels through France and Italy*. (Pub. 1766.)

Tobias Smollett, who travelled through France twelve years earlier, paints an unattractive picture of the seedy nobility of Boulogne :

"The *noblesse* are vain, proud, poor, and slothful. Very few of them have above six thousand livres a year, which may amount to about two hundred and fifty pounds sterling; and many of them not half this revenue. . . . The *noblesse* have not the common sense to reside at their houses in the country, where, by farming their own grounds, they might live at small expense, and improve their estates at the same time. They allow their country houses to go decay, and their gardens and fields to waste; and reside in dark holes in the Upper Town of Boulogne, without light, air, or convenience. There they starve within doors, that they may have the wherewithal to purchase fine clothes, and appear dressed once a day in the church, or on the rampart. They have no education, no taste for reading, no housewifery, nor, indeed, any earthly occupation but that of dressing their hair, and adorning their bodies. They hate walking, and would never go abroad, if they were not stimulated by the vanity of being seen . . . nothing can be more parsimonious than the economy of these people. They live upon soup and bouille, fish and salad. They never think of giving dinners, or entertaining their friends; . . . They . . . keep at a great distance from strangers, on pretence of a delicacy in the article of punctilio; but, as I am informed, this stateliness is in a great measure affected, in order to conceal their poverty, which would appear to greater disadvantage, if they admitted of a more familiar communication."

He, too, was shocked by the number of murders committed. Many occurred during the summer he spent at Boulogne, both in the town and the surrounding country, while the peasants, "from motives of envy and resentment," "frequently set their neighbours' houses on fire." These people were "often rendered desperate and savage, by the misery they suffered" "from the oppression and tyranny of their landlords," they were "ill lodged," and "wretchedly fed," and in Burgundy he saw "a our young nobility and gentry, who even travelling for their education, spent their money and time, little to their own improvement, or the credit of their country, frequently collecting mobs in the streets, by throwing money from their windows; and in their daily actions confirming Frenchmen in their unalterable opinions, that the English are all immensely rich; and consequently can afford to pay double what a Frenchman will for the same article." This traveller was the anonymous author of *The Gentleman's Guide in His Tour through France. Wrote by An Officer in the Royal Navy. Who lately travelled on a Principle, which he most sincerely recommends to his Countrymen, viz. Not to spend more Money in the Country of our natural Enemy, than is requisite to support with decency the character of an Englishman*. (Pub. 1770.) This book, however, is not so amusing as its title would suggest.

<sup>1</sup> *Tobias Smollett* (1721-71), novelist. He went abroad in 1763 for two years on account of his health; the *Travels* was published in 1766.

peasant plough the ground with a jack-ass, a lean cow, and a he-goat, yoked together."

Even the *bourgeoisie*, according to Smollett, could not prosper; in a country which produced the most luxurious furniture and interiors that the world has seen, their houses were frowsty and ill-appointed:

"In those which are well furnished, you see pier glasses and marble slabs; but the chairs are either paltry things, made with straw bottoms, which cost about a shilling a-piece, or old-fashioned, high-backed seats of needle-work, stuffed very clumsy and incommodious. The tables are square fir boards, that stand on edge in a corner, except when they are used, and then they are set upon cross legs that open and shut occasionally. The king of France dines off a board of this kind. Here is plenty of table-linen however. . . . The French beds are so high, that sometimes one is obliged to mount them by the help of steps. . . . They very seldom use feather beds: but they lie upon a *palliasse*, or bag of straw, over which are laid two, and sometimes three mattresses. Their testers<sup>1</sup> are high and old-fashioned, and their curtains generally of thin baize, red or green, laced with tawdry yellow, in imitation of gold. In some houses, however, one meets with furniture of stamped linen; but there is no such thing as a carpet to be seen, and the floors are in a very dirty condition. . . . Every chamber is furnished with an *armoire*, or clothes-press, and chest of drawers, of very clumsy workmanship. Every thing shows a deficiency of the mechanical arts. There is not a door, nor a window, that shuts close. The very chimneys are built so open, that they admit both rain and sun, and all of them smoke intolerably."

Smollett, who went to winter in Nice on account of his ill-health, who travelled through France, according to his own description, in "a grey mourning frock under a wide great coat" with "a meagre wrinkled, discontented countenance," hating everything—the people, who invariably "imposed" upon him; the inns, the houses, the food, the "dramatic pieces" "entirely devoid of wit and repartee," and the "hideous mask of painting worn by the women of fashion"—might well be considered prejudiced; but Arthur Young, a scientific and balanced observer, makes similar and more convincing criticisms in his famous *Travels in France and Italy*, written on the eve of the revolution.

Arthur Young<sup>2</sup>; *Travels in France and Italy, during the years 1787 1788 & 1789*.

In Paris he saw the Queen, more than ten years older than when Walpole

<sup>1</sup> tester: bed canopy.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Young (1741-1820), an authority on agriculture and social economy.

had admired her, but still peerlessly beautiful ; the traditional ceremonies, stilted and meaningless, continued, while the King looked bored, and a tatty crowd surged to the very door of the royal dining-room :

*27th March, 1787.*

"The ceremony of the day was the king's investing the Duke of Berri, son of the Count d'Artois, with the cordon bleu. The queen's band was in the chapel where the ceremony was performed, but the musical effect was thin and weak. During the service the king was seated between his two brothers, and seemed by his carriage and inattention to wish himself a hunting. He would certainly have been as well employed as in hearing afterwards from his throne a feudal oath of chivalry, I suppose, or some such nonsense, administered to a boy of ten years old.

"After this ceremony was finished, the king and the knights walked in a sort of procession to a small apartment in which he dined, saluting the queen as they passed. There appeared to be more ease and familiarity than form in this part of the ceremony ; Her Majesty, who, by the way, is the most beautiful woman I saw today, received them with a variety of expression. . . . The ceremony of the king's dining is more odd than splendid. The queen sat by him with a cover before her, but ate nothing ; conversing with the Duke of Orleans and the Duke of Liancourt, who stood behind her chair. To me it would have been a most uncomfortable meal, and were I sovereign I would sweep away three-fourths of these stupid forms ; if kings do not dine like other people, they lose much of the pleasure of life ; . . . The only comfortable and amusing dinner is a table of ten or twelve covers for the people they like ; travellers tell us that this was the mode of the late King of Prussia,<sup>1</sup> who knew the value of life too well to sacrifice it to empty forms on the one hand, or to monastic reserve on the other.

. . . . .

"The palace of Versailles, one of the objects of which report had given me the greatest expectation, is not the least striking : . . . From whatever point viewed, it appears an assemblage of buildings ; a splendid quarter of the town, but not a fine edifice ; . . . The whole place, except the chapel, seems to be open to all the world ; we pushed through an amazing crowd of all sorts of people to see the procession, many of them not very well dressed, whence it appears that no questions are asked. But the officers at the door of the apartment in which the king dined made a distinction, and would not permit all to enter promiscuously."

In the country, the peasants starved and rioted, the bourgeoisie lived

He made practical experiments in farming, and published a number of very popular books, such as *The Farmer's Calendar*, and *The Annals of Agriculture*. In 1793 he was appointed Secretary to the Board of Agriculture.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick the Great of Prussia. D. 1786.

stingily and talked subversively, while the nobility, even the greatest, such as the Count d'Artois, brother of the king, neglected their estates.

"The same wretched country continues to La Loge; the fields are scenes of pitiable management, as the houses are of misery. Yet all this country is highly improvable, if they knew what to do with it: the property, perhaps, of some of those glittering beings who figured in the procession the other day at Versailles. Heaven grant me patience while I see a country thus neglected—and forgive me the oaths I swear at the absence and ignorance of the possessors.—Enter the generality of Bourges, and soon after a forest of oak belonging to the Count d'Artois; the trees are dying at top, before they attain any size."

The Comte d'Artois' trees were withering, and so was the whole rich fertile country of France. Mile after mile of productive land had relapsed into heath, forest, and bog; the castles had fallen into ruin; the roads, even outside the large towns, were empty of traffic, implying a lamentable absence of commerce; gentlemen wandered into the king's bedchamber actually dressed in rags; in Paris nothing was cheap or plentiful except pamphlets and prostitutes. Yet it was a nation riddled with good intentions: the Duc de Liancourt had set up twenty-five spinning looms to relieve the unemployment problem, the Duchess had built a model dairy entirely of marble; Monsieur de Lomond had invented an improved spinning jenny, and the Marquis de Turgot pursued the traditional French occupation of cultivating exotic plants. On the farm of the Royal Society of Agriculture, the celebrated naturalist Monsieur d'Aubenton gave advanced lessons in dissecting animals to a hundred students, who, however, knew nothing of ploughing or of hoeing turnips. Learned, inventive, and inspired by "progress," the best brains of France could do nothing to save the gimcrack structure of the old régime; the patient observations of Arthur Young build up a picture of a country on the verge of disruption, where everybody suffered and complained, and the organisation of life had almost broken down.

The revolution, which recast the form of French society, followed by twenty-two years of war with England, made Englishmen strangers to France. Among the first who hurried across the channel after the declaration of peace to taste the new life and the old culture of France was Benjamin Haydon, the negligible painter, who has recorded his failures in a memorable autobiography.

*Benjamin Robert Haydon*<sup>1</sup>; *Autobiography*.

Haydon travelled to France, "pregnant with expectation" at the first

<sup>1</sup> *Robert Benjamin Haydon* (1786-1846). An artist with great ambitions and little talent, he is now remembered not for his painting, but for the autobiography which records his failures and shows that he might have been a successful writer. He was twice imprisoned for debt and finally committed suicide.



possible moment after the cessation of hostilities, when Napoleon was exiled in Elba, allied troops occupied the capital, and the Bourbons had just been reinstated.

Revolution, war and defeat had transformed the sparkling, dilapidated, ostentatious France of the late eighteenth century into a country which shocked him by its squalor, bitterness, and violence. The contrast with the lusty prosperity of England was startling :

" The contrast between Brighton and Dieppe was wonderful. Brighton gay, gambling, dissipated, the elegant residence of an accomplished Prince, with its beautiful women and light huzzars, its tandems and terriers ; Dieppe dark, old, snuffy and picturesque, with its brigand-like soldiers, its sybylline fish-fags, its pretty grisettes, and its screaming and chattering boatmen. The houses at Brighton present their windows to the ocean to let in its freshness and welcome its roar, whilst Dieppe turns her back on the sea, as if in sullen disgust at the sight of an element on which her country has always been beaten.

" Nothing could exceed our astonishment at the first sight of the French soldiers. The fragments of a regiment were drawn up on the parade, looking like a set of dirty galley-slaves, squalid, little and bony ; the officers with a handsome, pert activity of expression. I shall never forget seeing two great French huzzars approach and kiss each other's cheeks. The soldiers in this regiment were in different dresses ; some with cocked hats, some with shakos, some with trousers, some with breeches, some in shoes, some in boots ; all without the least uniformity."

The entry into Paris was a sinister experience :

" At length we were evidently approaching a great city, by the number of dirty cabs and equipages we met, but it was nothing like the approach to London. Around London, in all directions, are neat cottages—villas—all the various signs of sociability and happiness and comfort. As we neared Paris, everything had a deserted, forlorn, insecure appearance. Every now and then we saw an old chateau with a broken gate. The road never passed through a village, but by the side of it, as the railroads do now. The road appeared to us, in our anxiety to get on, melancholy and endless. We passed St. Denis (the chateau was a ruin) and directly after entered on the field of battle. It is an immense plain bounded by Montmartre and Chaumont, but to inexperienced eyes like ours nothing marked it as a battlefield but a tree here and there cut by shot.

" After driving throught it at our leisure we entered Paris by one of the most dreadful entrances this side the infernal regions ; we were saluted as we entered by one of those ear-ringed, red-capped blackguards, a relic perhaps of the bloody times of the revolution, with the most accomplished abuse."

Even the character of the French people appeared to have changed ; the giddy and irresolute temperament which Englishmen had assigned to them in previous centuries had become savage and menacing, so that it seemed that all the allied nations which flaunted themselves in the rue St. Honoré would hardly be able to withstand these enemies of civilisation :

" The French had a more martial air than the English. There seemed to be a species of military instinct in all classes. No young man appeared to have finished his education till after a bloody campaign. They spoke of war as of a thing of course, of its horrors as '*le sort de la guerre*,' as if the miseries of war were as much a constituent part of the existence of continental nations as their climate. There was an apathy, a notion of dark destiny about the thing, as though the bloody turmoil the rising generation had lived in had utterly destroyed their perceptions of right. They were at this singular period, without the least exaggeration, a century behind us in notions of legal and moral responsibility. Many wished at the time they had been made to suffer still more of the misery of war. But it is better they have been spared, because their vain ingratitude and unprincipled restlessness will be more apparent. Not a hundred years will pass before the great nations of Europe will be obliged, for their own security, more effectually to crush them."

. . . . .

" In the middle of the day the Rue St. Honoré was the most wonderful sight. Don Cossack chiefs loosely clothed and moving as their horses moved, with all the bendings of their bodies visible at every motion; the half-clothed savage Cossack horseman, his belt stuck full of pistols and watches and hatches, crouched up on a little ragged-maned, dirty-looking, ill-bred, half-white, shaggy pony ; the Russian Imperial guardsmen pinched in at the waist like a wasp, striding along like a giant, with an air of victory that made every Frenchman curse within his teeth as he passed him ; the English officer, with his boyish face and broad shoulders ; the heavy Austrian ; the natty Prussian, and now and then a Bashkir Tartar, in the ancient Phrygian cap, with bow and arrows and chain armour, gazing about him from his horse in the midst of black-eyed grisettes, Jews, Turks and Christians from all countries in Europe and Asia. It was a pageant that kept one staring, musing and bewildered from morning till night."

The resentment of the French against their English conquerors seemed to Haydon contemptible and unsportsmanlike. The performance of Ducis' adaptation of Hamlet, at the Theatre Français, provoked a most distressing outburst :

" When they are discussing what to do with Hamlet the King said,

*'Laissez a l'Angleterre et son deuil et ses pleurs  
L'Angleterre en forfaits trop souvent fut féconde.'*

"The pit rose in a body, and shouted with fury : '*Bravo, bravo, bravo ; à bas les Anglais, à bas les Anglais !*' pointing at us English all round the house. An Englishman opposite us said something which only enraged them more ; they foamed with fury. What was all this childish spite but the mouthing of beaten boys on the ground, afraid to get up after the blow which has floored them ?"

Everywhere he was depressed by the signs of ruin and destruction :

"At Pantin I entered a house belonging to M. le Grand ; here were traces of war such as I never wished to see again. It was a beautiful house, elegantly furnished, but reduced to a shell. In the parlour the Cossack horses had stabled, and their dung was still on the marble floor. All the window-shutters and cupboards had been wrenched off to burn. The paper of the room had been torn down, and the wainscot beaten in in search of money or plate that might be hidden between that and the wall. The splendid mirrors were shattered to atoms. The fruit trees in the gardens were cut to stumps, and the garden itself, laid out in the old French taste, with statues of shepherds and shepherdesses, trampled into desolation."

At Rambouillet, the rooms of Maria Louisa,<sup>1</sup> undisturbed since the day she had left on her flight from the country, were a touching sight :

"I proposed to go to Rambouillet, the hunting seat of the King of France ; he objected, so, at half past four in the morning, I got quietly up, and set off. I found a feudal-looking palace of two towers joined by more modern architecture.

"In passing through the chambers of Maria Louisa, I was affected at hearing how after her flight from Paris she came hither, the last league of the road on foot, with her boy. The rooms she used were precisely as she had left them. Her toilet equipage was tasteful, classical and golden. In a solitary corner, by her bed, stood her piano which I touched. . . .

"The old servant who showed me the rooms watched me with great interest. He said that for the last six days she scarcely touched anything, but walked about the grounds incessantly, and when her departure was fixed she became deeply affected. He told me she was of an exceedingly sweet disposition."

The private apartment of Napoleon, however, was awe-inspiring. So great was his renown, that even when defeated and dethroned the meaningless trappings of his vanished power were still impressive :

<sup>1</sup> Maria Louisa, second wife of Napoleon, daughter of the Emperor of Austria. On the fall of Napoleon she fled to Austria with her son.

"I passed on to the apartment of Napoleon. The man opened a little door ; I entered a twilight room of small dimensions. This was Napoleon's private closet for repose and reflection, to which nobody but the Empress was ever admitted. Opposite the window was an arch, under which was a most delicious sofa with pillows of the finest satin. Round the arch were painted in gold the names of Austerlitz, Marengo, Friedland and other fields of victory. Down the sides were the arms of all the states tributary to France, with groups of war instruments and arms, and N.N.N. with laurel bordering the head. On this luxurious couch he dreamed of conquered kings and great battles, and his imagination filled as he lay with future glories. . . . I stood, as it were, in his secret place. . . . The rocking-horse and playthings of the King of Rome were still lying about the garden."

The nation which to the romantic Haydon appeared so ruined and irredeemable, was soon to produce a prosperous and emphatic civilisation ; the pushing, flamboyant, bourgeois civilisation of the nineteenth century, as adventurous in the realms of the intellect and the imaginations as it was enterprising in industry and finance. To this new France, where the amenities of life were both more vulgar and more accessible than in the days of the old aristocratic society, as many British travellers as ever before were attracted. Particularly they were drawn to Paris, to marvel at the flaunting *nouveau riche* luxuries, the pleasures brazenly bought and sold, the cult of lurid romanticism or shocking realism, the outrageous innovations in taste and art.

George Moore<sup>1</sup>; *Confessions of a Young Man*. (Pub. 1888.)

George Moore, the Irishman, visiting Paris in 1870, explored this exhilarating world with the "tense, irresponsible curiosity" and the searing sensibility of a young artist ; his experiences, he admitted, marked him, and his work, for ever. *Confessions of a Young Man*, the record of these years, was, he wrote, "a sort of genesis, the seed of everything I have written since will be found herein."

With the captivating but disappointing Henry Marshall, he dabbled in fast life ; spurious idylls, which, just because they were spurious, fired his perverse imagination :

"On my arrival in Paris I had visited, in the company of my taciturn valet, the Mabilles and the Valentinos, and dined at the Maison d'Or by myself ; but Marshall took me to strange students' *cafés*, where dinners were paid for in pictures ; to a mysterious place, where a *table d'hôte* was

<sup>1</sup> George Moore (1852-1933). Irish novelist ; went to Paris to study art in 1870, lived afterwards in England and Ireland.

held under a tent in a back garden, frequented by the lights of love of Montmartre, with whom we went to walk in the gardens of Bullier, the Chateau Rouge, or the Elysée Montmartre. . . .

"It often seemed to me that Marshall was not conscious of the fantastic greenness of the foliage under the gas-lights, or the unreality of the life we were leading in the company of women, known only to us by their Christian names. He took it all for granted, whereas I lived it in my imagination, exalted by the clangour of the band, the thronging of the dancers, and of all by the returning home in open carriages through the close, warm night, the darkness chequered by an ostrich-feather hanging over the hood of the carriage in front of us, an edge of shirt passing beyond the foot-board. 'She is in his arms,' I said. 'Does she love him?' I asked, and watched the moon and compared it to a magic-lantern hanging out of the sky."

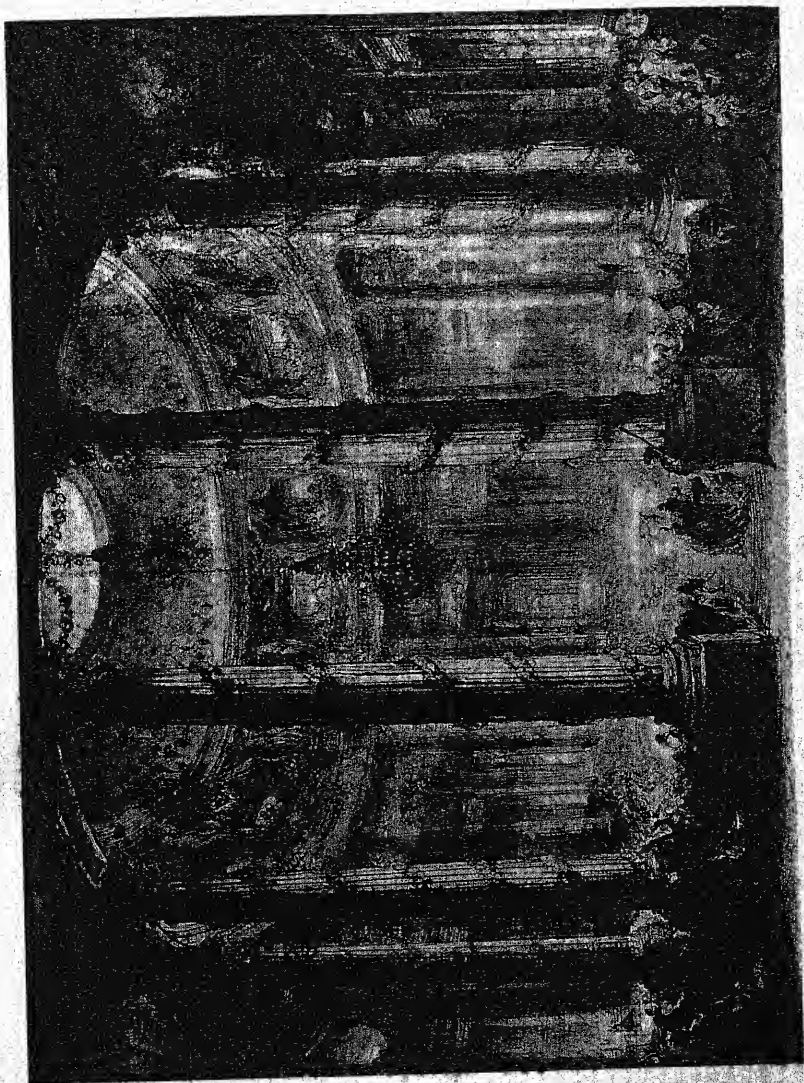
Together they practised the fashionable cult of sensation-seeking; roamed Paris in quest of degradation, danger, and the snobbish satisfaction of flirting in high society:

"A year passed; a year of art and dissipation—one part art, two parts dissipation. We mounted and descended at pleasure the rounds of society's ladder. One evening we would spend at Constant's, Rue de la Gaité, in the company of thieves and house-breakers; on the following evening we were dining with a duchess or a princess in the Champs Elysées. We prided ourselves vastly on our versatility in using with equal facility the language of the 'fence's' parlour, and that of the literary salon; on being able to appear as much at home in one as in the other. Delighted at our prowess, we often whispered, 'The princess, I swear, would not believe her eyes if she saw us now'; and then in terrible slang we shouted a benediction on some 'crib' that was going to be broken into that evening. We thought there was something very thrilling in leaving the Rue de la Gaité, returning home to dress, and presenting our spotless selves to the *élite*, in being at home in all company, in being able to waltz perfectly in different styles, and to avoid making love to the wrong woman."

In their apartment, they prided themselves on an exotic and slightly vicious æstheticism:

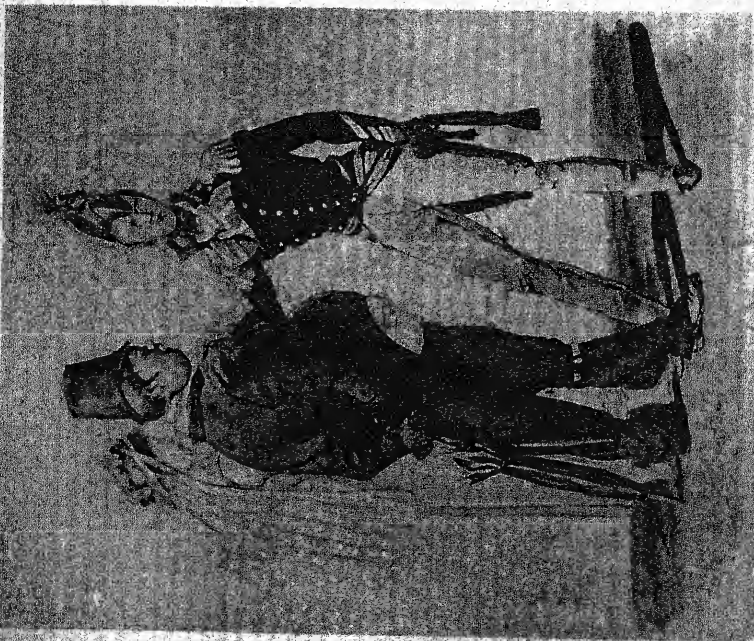
"Then I took an *appartement* in one of the old houses in the Rue de la Tour des Dames, four windows there overlooked a bit of tangled garden with a dilapidated statue. It was Marshall, of course, who undertook the task of furnishing, and he lavished on the rooms the fancies of an imagination that suggested the collaboration of a courtesan of high degree and a fifth-rate artist. Nevertheless, our salon was a pretty resort—English cretonne of a very happy design—vine leaves, dark green and golden, broken up by many fluttering jays. The walls were stretched with this



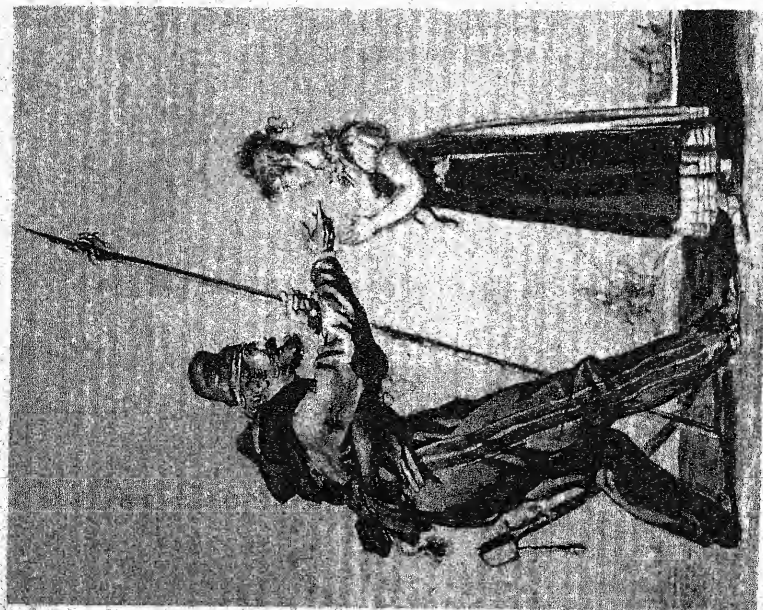


A fête in the Colisée in 1772.  
*Engraving by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin. From the original in the Wallace Collection, by permission.*

PLATE IV



The English in Paris (1815).  
From lithographs by Carle Vernet.



The Gallant Cossack (1815).  
By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

colourful cloth, and the arm-chairs and the couches were to match. The drawing-room was in cardinal red hung from the middle of the ceiling and looped up to give the appearance of a tent; a faun, in terra-cotta, laughed in the red gloom, and there were Turkish couches and lamps. In another room you faced an altar, a Buddhist temple, a statue of Apollo, and a bust of Shelley. The bedrooms were made unconventional with cushioned seats and rich canopies; and in picturesque corners there were censers, great church candlesticks, and palms; then think of the smell of burning incense and wax and you will have imagined the sentiment of our apartment in Rue de la Tour des Dames. I bought a Persian cat, and a python that made a monthly meal off guinea-pigs; Marshall, who did not care for pets, filled his rooms with flowers—he used to sleep beneath a tree of gardenias in full bloom. We were so, Henry Marshall and George Moore, when we went to live in 76 Rue de la Tour des Dames, we hoped for the rest of our lives. He was to paint, I was to write.

.....

"A Japanese dressing-gown, the ideality of whose tissue delights me, some fresh honey and milk set by this couch hung with royal fringes; and having partaken of this odorous refreshment, I call to Jack, my great python crawling about after a two months' fast. I tie up a guinea-pig to the *tabouret*, pure Louis XV, the little beast struggles and squeaks, the snake, his black, bead-like eyes are fixed, how superb are the oscillations. . . now he strikes: and with what exquisite gourmandise he lubricates and swallows!

"Marshall is at the organ in the hall, he is playing a Gregorian chant, that beautiful hymn, the '*Vexilla Regis*,' by Saint Fortunatus, the great poet of the Middle Ages. And, having turned over the leaves of '*Les Fêtes Galantes*' I sit down to write."

Yet this preposterous couple witnessed a marvellous output of art and literature, which Moore, at least, appreciated:

'It's nearly one o'clock; get up. What's the news?'

'Today is the opening of the Impressionists. We'll breakfast round the corner, at Durand's, and go on there. I hear that Bedlam is nothing to it; at one end of the room there is a canvas twenty feet square and in three tints: pale yellow for the sunlight, brown for the shadows, and all the rest is sky-blue. A lady walks, I'm told, in the foreground with a ring-tailed monkey, and the tail is said to be three yards long.'

"We went to jeer a group of enthusiasts that willingly forfeit all delights of the world in the hope of realising a new æstheticism; we went insolent with patent leather shoes and bright kid gloves and armed with all the jargon of the school. . . . We indulged in boistrous laughter, exaggerated in the hope of giving as much pain as possible, and deep down in our souls we knew we were lying—at least I did."

His acquaintance with the writers and artists of the day cut an ineffaceable mark on his mind. "I did not go either to Oxford or Cambridge," he wrote, "but I went to the Nouvelle Atnéhes":

"How magnetic, intense, and vivid are these memories of youth! With what strange, almost unnatural clearness do I see and hear—see the white face of that *café*, the white nose of that block of houses, stretching up to the Place, between two streets. I can see down the incline of those two streets, and I know what shops are there; I can hear the glass door of the *café* grate on the sand as I open it. I can recall the smell of every hour. In the morning that of eggs frizzling in butter, the pungent cigarette, coffee and bad cognac; at five o'clock the fragrant odour of absinthe, and soon after the steaming soup ascends from the kitchen; and as the evening advances, the mingled smells of cigarettes, coffee, and weak beer. A partition, rising a few feet or more over the hats, separates the glass front from the main body of the *café*. The usual marble tables are there, and it is there we sat and æstheticised till two o'clock in the morning. But who is that man? he whose prominent eyes flash with excitement. That is Villiers de l'Isle Adam. The last or supposed last of the great family. He is telling that girl a story—that fair girl with heavy eyelids, stupid and sensual. She is, however, genuinely astonished and interested, and he is striving to play upon her ignorance. . . .

"At that moment the glass door of the *café* grated upon the sanded floor, and Manet entered. Although by birth and art essentially a Parisian, there was something in his appearance and manner of speaking that often suggested an Englishman. Perhaps it was his dress—his clean-cut clothes and figure. That figure! those square shoulders that swaggered as he went across a room, and the thin waist; and that face, the beard and nose, satyr-like shall I say? No, for that would evoke an idea of beauty of line united to that of intellectual expression—frank words, frank passion in his convictions, loyal and simple phrases, clear as well-water, sometimes a little hard, sometimes, as they flowed away, bitter, but at the fountain-head sweet and full of light. He sits next to Degas, that round-shouldered man in suit of pepper-and-salt. There is nothing very trenchantly French about him either, except the large necktie; his eyes are small, and his words are sharp, ironical, cynical.

"About midnight Catulle Mendès will drop in, when he has corrected his proofs. He will come with his fine paradoxes and his strained eloquence. He will lean towards you, he will take you by the arm, and his presence is a nervous pleasure. And when the *café* is closed, when the last bock has been drunk, we shall walk about the great moonlight of the Place Pigalle, and through the dark shadows of the streets, talking of the last book published, he hanging onto my arm, speaking in that high febrile voice of his, every phrase luminous, aerial, even as the soaring moon and the fit-



ful clouds. . . . Paul Alexis, Leon, Dierx, Pissaro, Cabaner are also frequently seen in the Nouvelle Athènes."

Many travellers, before and since George Moore, have received such indelible impressions, many artists and writers have been permanently influenced by their journeys to Paris and France, which, until recently, represented to the British, and indeed to men of other nations, a source of art and civilisation comparable to Italy in the days of the Grand Tour.

The Fall of France in 1940 came as something overwhelming and incredible; innumerable people, who had all their lives counted on Paris as the centre of European culture, woke up, like Cecily Mackworth, to find their windows blackened by a mysterious fog, walked out, abandoning their homes, to find mass suffering, starvation, and death.

*Cecily Mackworth : I came out of France. (Pub. 1941.)*

"When everything was ready I went out. I didn't even lock up behind me. I had a sort of superstitious feeling that if I took no precautions I had more chance of coming back some day.

Outside the fog was lifting as the hot sun pierced through, but everything still looked weird and gloomy. People were standing about wondering what had happened and I heard someone say that smoke bombs had been dropped during the night.

All the bakers' shops were closed and most of the shop-keepers seemed to have left the town already. I got some chocolate and a few oranges, but there was nothing else to be had.

All around the Rue de Sèvres the streets were quite empty, but as I approached the Gare de Montparnasse, walking towards Robert's flat, there was a tremendous crowd blocking the street. Thousands of people were waiting there because a rumour had been put about that a train was to leave for the south later in the day.

The people were waiting in a kind of apathetic despair, not really believing in the promised train, but too tired and hopeless to take any initiative. The Place de Rennes looked like a huge Bedouin camp with men, women and children lying stretched in the road, some eating and drinking, others pressed against the walls of the houses to snatch a little shade, others trying to comfort terrified children. There was an extraordinary hush, everyone seemed to be listening as though to catch the first sound of the invading army.

I began to regret that Robert had insisted that I should travel in my nurse's uniform. I tried to force a way through the crowd, but I was surrounded in an instant by women holding out their sick children, beg-



ging me to get them food. Someone caught hold of my arm and dragged and pushed me to a doorstep, where a woman was lying unconscious. I had a portable Red Cross case with me and tried to bring her round with ether, but she never moved. Before I could do anything more I was dragged away to attend to a sick child, then to an old woman who seemed to be dying. I could do nothing for them, but I was caught and saw that there was no possibility of getting as far as Robert's house. I wondered if he would leave without me, but it was no good worrying and I resigned myself to do what I could for the sick with words of comfort and an ether bottle.

Presently I heard a man shouting 'Nurse, nurse!' It was a policeman waving to me over the heads of the crowd. He forced his way up to me. He had taken off his helmet and his face was dripping with sweat and his uniform torn.

'There are a lot of sick people,' he said. 'Can you do anything for them?'

'I don't know what to do,' I said, 'I haven't any medicine and anyway what they want is food and drink.' . . . 'Look,' I said, 'these people aren't so much sick as starving. Lots of them have come from Belgium and the north and they're worn out and have no homes and no money. If we don't get milk for the children a lot of them are going to die.'

'That's right,' said the policeman. 'But we haven't got any milk.'

'There's still condensed milk in the grocers' shops,' I said. 'If you'll let me break into the stores, I'll make drinks for the children at least.'

The policeman looked startled and said, 'I can't let you do that. It's private property.'

'I represent the Red Cross,' I told him, 'and I have the right to requisition anything necessary.'

I don't suppose he really believed me, yet he hesitated a little, then told me to do as I liked. Some women had heard us talking and came clustering round, holding out babies' bottles and begging for milk. I chose two tough-looking men from the crowd, and we forced our way through the square to the grocery stores. The men had the door open in a minute and then we were inside and searching the shelves and boxes for condensed milk. There wasn't much, but I took all I could find and went into the kitchen behind the shop and made milk from the tins. We took all the food, too, and gave it to the people nearest. Soon the shop was empty and we repeated the same thing farther down the road. A few children had been fed by then, but anything one person could do seemed hopeless in the face of thousands who were sick and hungry."

Leaving Paris by car the same night, she joined in that pitiable adventure,

the trekking of the refugees, which, during the past five years, has become one of the commonest forms of travel :

"The long double file of cars moved forward slowly and silently. Every now and then a dispatch-rider on a motor bicycle rode alongside, jostling them into line or calling us to halt until some military convoy had passed. . . . From time to time we could hear an aeroplane circling slowly overhead, and then the soldiers would hurry along the file of cars, stopping at each just long enough to whisper, 'Danger. Don't show any light.' . . .

The night passed very slowly and when light began to break we saw that the long file of cars was now quite immobile. It had stopped raining and we got out of the car and walked up and down, trying to warm ourselves. The road was full of people, sitting on the steps of their cars, trying to make some sort of toilet, drinking from thermos flasks or talking in groups. Those who had bicycles or were travelling on foot continued to push their way wearily along the road, or sat and rested while they ate their provisions. There was no longer the semblance of military control which we had seen the night before. A few people were already abandoning their cars, pushing them over into the ditch and setting off on foot. One of them said that the road had been jammed for over three hours and the last soldiers who had passed that way had told them that it would be better to get away as well as they could. . . .

Presently we saw a woman winding her way among the crowd, begging for milk for the two haggard babies clasped in her arms. When she caught sight of me, she came up and said 'Can't you help me, nurse? My babies have had nothing to eat or drink for two days and they will die if I can't get milk for them.' "

## 2. VENICE AND ITALY

*Richard Lassels*<sup>1</sup>; *The Voyage of Italy, or a Compleat Journey through Italy.*

"I WOULD therefore have my young nobleman's governour to carry him immediately into Italy at fifteen or sixteen," wrote Richard Lassels in his preface to his *Voyage of Italy*, "and there to season his mind with the gravity and wise maxims of that nation, which hath civilised the whole world, and taught mankind what it is to be a man."

The civilisation of the Italian renaissance, which changed the appearance of France, changed the mind of England. To a young Englishman of Lassels' period, a visit to Italy was an essential part of his education, the most important item in the tour of Europe, which was then regarded as a necessary preparation for the career and duties of a patriotic nobleman:

"So," argued Lassels, "the nobleman by long travelling, having enlightened his understanding with fine notions, comes home like a glorious sun, and doth not only shine bright in the firmament of his country, the Parliament House; but also blesseth his inferiors with the powerful influence of his knowing spirit."

Englishmen of the seventeenth century felt a need for improving themselves. During the last hundred years England, profiting from the new discoveries, had become a rising commercial and industrial power, blatant with ambition and newly acquired wealth. Conscious of their opportunities, greedy for advancement, Englishmen were aware of a certain rawness and backwardness in their behaviour and style of living. "Indeed," Lassels wrote, "its not long ago that great men dwelt no longer in thatched houses." As they looked to the Indies for wealth, so they looked to Europe for culture, especially to Italy, where civilisation had first emerged from "Gothic" barbarism, setting an example which had inspired the whole world. Italy had at that period the peculiar glamour that appertains

<sup>1</sup> *Richard Lassels* (1603?-1668). A Roman Catholic, he studied at the English College at Douay, became a professor of classics and was ordained a priest. As a tutor to the young English nobility he made many journeys in Europe: three in Flanders, six in France, five in Italy, and a tour through Holland and Germany. His *Italian Voyage* was first published posthumously in Paris in 1670, edited by Simon Wilson. A second and enlarged edition appeared in London in 1698, from which these extracts are taken. He also wrote, *An account of the journey of Lady Catherine Whetenhall from Brussels to Italy in 1660* (Birch M.S. 4217, British Museum).

to full-blown civilisations, in which material decadence is combined with the utmost refinement of culture. The discovery of the sea-routes to the East, which had made the wealth of England, had turned the Mediterranean into a backwater; the Italian states, their commerce dwindling, their political prestige lost, rested in the enjoyment of the art of living.

No influence could have been more beneficial to Englishmen. The tour of Europe, to Italy and back, via France, Germany and the Netherlands, which became recognised in the eighteenth century as the Grand Tour, was regarded as a training for life, the means of acquiring not only learning and accomplishments, but a certain standard of manners and behaviour. It was the origin of the conception of the English gentleman, the man of old family, large estates, and political ambitions, who combines an appreciation of classical antiquity and the Italian renaissance with polished manners, faultless grooming, and an unshakable composure in all circumstances. This ideal has remained the basis of English culture ever since, though it has grown increasingly more dated and irrelevant.

But the bumptious young squires of Lassels' time were badly in need of such an education. Surprisingly, it seems to have been manliness in which they were most deficient. Travel, explains Lassels, "preserves my young nobleman from surfeiting of his parents, and weans him from a dangerous fondness of his mother. It teacheth him wholesome hardship. . . . Whereas the country gentleman that never travelled, can scarce go to London without making his will, at least without wetting his handkerchief." Travel also taught modesty: "For . . . the country lord, that never saw anybody but his father's tenants and Mr. Parson; and never read anything but John Stow and Speed, thinks the Lands-end to be the Worlds-end; and all solid greatness, next unto a great pasty, consists in a great fire, and a good estate"; whereas the travelled nobleman, acquainted with the culture of France, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, came home with a decent sense of his unimportance. Some, of course, failed to profit from their opportunities: "Others travel abroad, as our ship-boys do into the Indies; for whiles these boys might bring home jewels, pearls, and many other things of value, they bring home nothing but firecanes, parrots, and monkeys, so our young travellers, whiles they might bring home many rich observations, for the governing themselves, and others, bring home nothing but firecanes, that is a hotspur humour, that takes fire at every word, and talk of nothing but duels, seconds, and esclairsissements; or else parrots, that is come loaden home with ribbons and feathers of all colours like parrots, and with a few borrowed compliments in their mouths, which make them talk like parrots, or else monkeys, that is some affected cringes, shrugs, and such like apish behaviour." But the wise young traveller knew how to "pick out of every country what's best in it." In France he learnt such graceful accomplishments as fencing, dancing, riding, vaulting, and handling his pike, musket, and

colours, also an "open, airy and gallant behaviour," which was not, however, to be exaggerated into that "phantastical giddiness" which Lassels, like other English travellers, deplored in the gentlemen of seventeenth-century France. Particularly he was to shun their "phantastical and fanfaron clothings," and that dangerous passion for tennis, which, apparently, was still as prevalent as when the disapproving Robert Dallington visited France at the beginning of the century: "For some in travelling, aim at nothing but to get loose of their parents, or schoolmasters, and to have the fingering of a pretty allowance; and these men, when they come into France, care for seeing no court but the tennis court; delight in seeing no balls but tennis balls, and forsake any company, to toss whole days together with a tattered marker of tripot."

The Italians, to whom, Lassels considered, Europe owed "its civility as well as its religion," were much safer company. Few pitfalls were to be encountered among them, except the famous courtesans of Venice, who for certain young Englishmen were the sole attraction of Italy, so that they travelled "a whole month together to Venice, only to lie with an impudent woman. And thus by false aiming at breeding abroad, they return with those diseases which hinder them from breeding at home." But those who resisted this temptation had every opportunity of employing their time in the noblest pursuits; in "viewing the several courts, studying their maxims, imitating their gentle conversations, and following the sweet exercises of music, painting, architecture, and mathematics."

Lassels himself had first-hand experience of the snares and rewards which attended the young travelling gentleman. A Roman Catholic priest and a professor of the classics, he made his living as a tutor, spending the greater part of his life conducting the sons of the English nobility on European tours. His *Voyage of Italy*, dedicated to his last charge, Lord Lumley, was the fruit of his five journeys into Italy and his many years of devoted study of the country. For Lassels seems to have been one of those Englishmen, of which there have been a number since, who have loved Italy beyond reason. "For the country itself," he writes, "it seemes to me to be Nature's darling, and the eldest sister of all other countries; . . . and if there be any fault in Italy, it is, that her mother nature hath indulged her even to wantonness." It was a "luxuriant" country "sweating out whole forests of olive-trees, whole woods of lemons and oranges," where even the barren mountains "which seem to have been shaven by the sun" were "impregnated" with precious marbles, where "the surface also of the earth is covered with many curious simples and wholesome herbs: Hence so many rare essences, cordials, perfumes, sweet water, and other odiferous distillations, so common here, that ordinary barbers and laundresses will sprinkle them in your face, and perfume your linen with them over and above your bargain"; a country, "in fine," that "excells in all kinds of provisions either for diet or sport;



and I have seen in Rome whole cartloads of wild boars and venison brought in at once to be sold in the market ; and above threescore hares in Florence brought in, in one day, by the two companies of hunters, the *Piacevoli* and *Piatelli* on a general hunting day."

His "Voyage" is a detailed catalogue of the almost unbelievably rich civilisation that had accumulated in this favoured land ; the churches, monasteries, and relics, the libraries and manuscripts, the palaces, armories, pictures, statues, gardens, fountains, and collections of "curiosities," together with an account of contemporary courts and governments, scholars, writers and scientists, and the Academies of Wits which were then an institution of every considerable town. All Italy is included in his admiring survey, as far south as Naples, the prospect of which, viewed from a neighbouring hill, he considers unsurpassed even by that of Greenwich, which was esteemed by some the finest in Europe.

The book, referred to by many contemporary and later travellers, became what he intended it to be, a standard work, the necessary equipment of a travelling gentleman. We indeed must envy the many country bumpkins who must have relied upon it, not only for the enchanting style in which it is written, but the objects which he recommends to their attention. The seventeenth-century passion for science, for natural history and mechanics, in this period when science was a romantic enterprise and a fashionable pleasure, inspires his selection. In the new baroque palace in Turin, he praises the "curious invention," a "pulley and a swing" whereby the Duchess of Savoy was transported with "great ease and safety" from her bedroom to a bathing chamber on the floor above ; the Cloaca Maxima he classes as "one of the rare magnificences of ancient Rome," a more convincing evidence of Roman greatness than that of Helio-gabalus, "who caused all the spiders' webs of Rome to be gathered together and weighed, that by so many pound of weight spiders' webs, the greatness of Rome might be better conjectured."

Italy had by this time become a vast treasure house of those "rarities," "exotic curiosities" and "ingenious contrivances" which fascinated the seventeenth-century mind. The type of gardening which had been so enthusiastically copied in France had reached its peak of luxurious artificiality in the service of the pleasure-loving Italian nobility. Fountains of incredibly complex mechanism, such as delighted Evelyn and Coryate, hydraulic organs, "wetting sports," grottoes, perspectives, *trompe d'œils*, aquariums, aviaries, and "seraglios" of wild beasts were the amenities of every great palace. In the new gardens of the Palazzo Pitti, the residence of the Dukes of Medici, Lassels describes an amphitheatre enclosed by a demi-circle of laurel trees, wherein the nobility exhibited "sports of cavalry," while in a "fair court," lions, leopards, tigers, bears, wolves, foxes and wild boars were let out to fight, after which spectacle they were enticed back into their cages "by a

fearful machine of wood made like a great green dragon, which a man within it rolls upon wheels ; and holding two lighted torches at the eyes of it, frights the fiercest beast thereby into his den."

In this palace he also saw a nail, half gold, half iron, made by the famous alchemist Thurnheuser, and a "curious looking glass. . . . which placed directly over a picture of a man, contracts into the picture of a woman that man's wife which you clearly see in it." In the "cabinet" of the Canon Setali in Milan were petrified fruits and fungi, a mandragora, and various pretty contrivances which worked by magnetism, as for instance "a little round cabinet, flat above like a child's drum, with a smooth glass ; the master setting little ships, coaches, etc., upon the glass, they move and wheel up and down as it were of themselves." In Rome, while examining the almost overpowering wealth of splendid monuments, the classical ruins, the churches with their innumerable relics, the palaces filled with statues ancient and modern, famous paintings and collections of jewels, he had time to note such fashionable extravagances as a picture in the garden of Montalto of David killing Goliath, which revolved upon a frame "and shows you both the foreshadow of the combatants and their backsides too, which other pictures do not," a bedstead in the villa Ludovisio, constructed entirely of precious stones, and in the gardens of the Villa d'Este, "false birds chirping on true trees, every one according to his true nature ; and all of them chattering at once at the sight of a false owl, appearing and howling in a tree."

The great centres of Italian civilisation, Turin, Genoa, Milan, Florence, Rome, Naples, Padua, Venice, rivalled each other in the possession of splendid monuments of the past and brilliant modern inventions ; even places of less importance, like Ancona and Viterbo, contained many things fit to be studied and admired. But of all the cities of Italy, Lassels considered Venice the most improving, for in spite of its notorious courtesans, dignity and self-possession, the proper attributes of a gentleman, were to be observed there better than anywhere else. This ancient republic, which for centuries had accumulated wealth and wisdom by its contact with the East, whose ships had brought from Egypt those oriental luxuries that Europe craved, spices and perfumes and silks and precious stones,<sup>1</sup> had built up an imposing tradition of aristocratic behaviour. During the last four hundred years the Venetian nobility had controlled the republic and held a monopoly of its Levantine trade ;

<sup>1</sup> Before the discovery of the sea route to the East, spices, silks and other oriental luxuries were brought to Egypt by Arab merchants, and then distributed to the rest of Europe by the Venetians, who held a monopoly of this profitable trade. After Bartholemew Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487, the Portuguese established themselves in the Indian Ocean, and usurped the place of the Arabs and Venetians, bringing oriental products straight to Lisbon in their own ships. By the time Lassels visited Italy, England and Holland had supplanted Portugal in the East, and Venice had become even more unimportant.

under their domination Venice had evolved a civilisation which provoked the envy and wonder of Europe. It is true that when Lassells visited Venice the republic was already far gone in decline ; the discovery of the Cape route to the Indies at the end of the fifteenth century, the exhausting struggle against the Turks, and the disastrous Italian wars, had destroyed Venetian commercial supremacy forever. But as often happens in a period of declining power, the fine arts and the art of living had reached their highest development. The works of Titian, Sansovino, Tintoretto, Palladio and Veronese all belong to the sixteenth century ; when Lassells saw the city its outward magnificence was far greater than in the days of its highest prosperity.

The aristocratic Venetians, surrounded by these splendours, conscious of their glorious past and jealous of their remaining glory, were more than ever careful to maintain their traditions ; secretive, suspicious stately and aloof, they were a pattern for the young noblemen of a rising *nouveau riche* country such as England :

“ And as a philosopher anciently said that when he came from Corinth to Sparta, he seemed to come from horses to men, so methought, when I came from France to Venice I came from boys to men. For here I saw the handsomest, the most sightly, the most proper and grave men that ever I saw anywhere else. They wear always in the town (I speak of the noblemen) a long black gown, a black cap knit, with an edging of black wool about it, like a fringe, an ancient and manly wear, which makes them look like senators. Their hair is generally the best I saw anywhere ; these little caps not pressing it down as our hats do, and periwigs are here forbid. Under their long gowns (which fly open before) they have handsome black suits of rich stuffs, with stockings and garters, and Spanish leather shoes neatly made. In a word, I never saw so many proper men together, nor so wise, as I saw daily there walking upon the Piazza of St. Mark. I may boldly say, that I saw there five hundred gentlemen walking together every day, every one of which was able to play the Ambassador in any prince's court of Europe. But the misery is, that we strangers cannot walk there with them, and talk with them, but must keep out of their way, and stand aloof off. The reason is this : This state (as all republics are) being hugely jealous of her liberty and preservation, forbids her noblemen and senators to converse with foreign ambassadors, or any man that either is an actual servant or follower of an ambassador, or hath the least relation to any prince's agent, without express leave : And this upon pain of being suspected as a traitor, and condignly punished.”

But the women, with their ultra-sophisticated fashions, appeared to Lassells' English eye *outré* rather than attractive :

“ As for the women here, they would gladly get the same reputation

that their husbands have, of being tall and handsome ; but they overdo it with their horrible *cioppini*, or high shoes, which I have often seen to be a full half yard high. I confess, I wondered at first, to see women go upon stilts, and appear taller by the head than any man ; and not be able to go any whether without resting their hands upon the shoulders of two grave matrons that usher them : But at last, I perceived that it was good policy, and a pretty ingenious way either to clog women at home by such heavy shoes (as the Egyptians kept their wives at home by allowing them no shoes at all) ; or at least to make them not able to go either far, or alone, or invisibly."

Although Lassels appreciated the fine buildings of the city, he was more impressed by its wealth and its strategic position than by its beauty. This is the usual attitude of seventeenth-century travellers : they admired the situation of Venice because it rendered the city secure against land attack, as a curiosity in the technique of defence, rather than as an æsthetic advantage. Venice, magnificent and extraordinary, seemed to them a phenomenon of commercial success and political power ; its beauty was never esteemed unique. Not until the latter part of the eighteenth century, when Venetian power was no more than a memory, and when scientific curiosity had been superseded by the new cult of romantic sensibility, did the picture of Venice rising from the waves capture the imagination of English travellers. Robert Gray, Vicar of Farrington, who made the Grand Tour in 1792, echoed the fashion of his day when he wrote : " We left the carriages at Fusina, and entering the open Lagune had a fine view of Venice, gilded by the rays of an evening sun, and appearing to have just risen, as the mother of Love is described, in elegant and classic imagery, from the waves of the sea " ; while Lassels introduces his account of the city in much more homely if no less admiring terms :

" Venice at first was nothing but a company of little dry spots of ground, which held up their heads in a shallow sea, furnished with seven rivers, . . . which run into it. To these little dry spots of ground, fishermen repaired anciently for their fishing, and built little cottages upon them. But afterwards Italy being overrun by Goths, Huns and Visigoths, divers rich men, from several parts of Italy, as well as from Padua, fled hither with the best of their goods, to save themselves in these poor cottages, unknown to those barbarous nations : . . .

" As for Venice now, 'tis one of the fairest cities in Europe, and called by the proverbial epithet, *Venetia la Riccha*, Venice the rich. Its well nigh eight miles in compass, and in form something like a lute. It hath no wall about it to defend it, but a mote of water."

In the Place of St. Mark—the *Piazza*—the celebrated haunt of noblemen and senators, oriental merchants, and the charlatans and mountebanks, who



here, as in France, provided the most popular entertainments, he was struck by the great extent of the luxurious buildings, by the fact that they would be adequate to house large numbers of wealthy and important persons :

“ This is one of the noblest Piazzas that a man can see in any town. It runs from the sea-side, up along the palace, to the church of St. Mark, and from thence turning on the left hand, it spreads itself into a more large and longer open space, most beautiful to behold ; for the whole Piazza even from the sea-side to the farther end, is built upon arches, and marble pillars ; and raised up with beautiful lodgings, fit to lodge all the *Procuratori* of St. Mark ; all the rich foreign merchants ; a world of persons of condition ; . . . In that part of the Piazza which lies under the Palace the *Nobili Venetiani* walk together, twice a day, to confer about business of state. . . . In this piazza I found always a world of strangers perpetually walking and talking of bargains and traffic, as Greeks, Armenians, Albanians, Slavonians, Polonians, Jews, and even Turks themselves ; all in their several habits, but all conspiring in this one thing, to sell dear, and buy cheap. Here also they have every night in summer, a world of *montebanks*, *ciarlatani*, and such stuff, who together with their drugs and remedies, strive to please people with their little comedies, poppet-plays, songs, music-stories, and such like buffoonery.”

Like all seventeenth-century travellers, he was greatly impressed by the Arsenal, where huge quantities of weapons were manufactured and stored for the use of the republic. In the Doge's palace there was also a little arsenal, a “ cabinet of Mars,” which contained, besides arms for a thousand men in case of insurrection, a number of “ curiosities,” souvenirs of the many Italian broils and feuds as pretty and ingenious as any of the fountains or mechanical toys. Among others he saw :

“ A cannon of iron carrying two miles, and curiously wrought into flowers with the points of chisels. The collar of iron of the Paduan tyrant (as they call him here) Carara. The little iron cross-bow of the same tyrant, with which he is said to have shot needles a span long, and killed many men privately, who knew not how, or by whom they were hurt. Then the devil's organs, or a trunk of leather, with ten pistol barrels in it, of a foot and a half long ; and so disposed in order like organ pipes, that upon the opening of the lock of this trunk, all these barrels being charged with several bullets, should let fly at once ; and so scattering wide, kill all those that should be in the room. This trunk was contrived by a revengeful man, who having a mind to be revenged both of his enemy, and of his enemy's friends at once, sent him this trunk by an unknown bearer (as a present from a friend) while he treated



his friends at dinner. The holes through the sides of it, made by the bullets, show the devilish effect of this trunk, and how well it deserves the name of the devil's organ. . . . A pistol in a pocket-book here is as bad as the others ; which being charged and let off, would presently read your doom."

In the famous glass works of Murano he saw other elegant examples of Italian ingenuity :

" Sometimes to show their art they make here pretty things. One made a ship in glass, with all her tacklings, guns, masts, sails, and streamers. Another made an organ of glass three cubits high, so justly contrived, that by blowing into it, and touching the stops, it sounded musically. A third made a perfect castle, with all of its fortifications, ramparts, cannons, sentry-houses and gates."

But Venice, in spite of its riches and glory, its exemplary gentlemen, and its many treasures, did not appeal to him as much as other Italian cities. Its situation, although strategically admirable, made it unpleasant and unhealthy as a residence :

" Having thus seen all Venice, over and over again, in a month's stay there, I was most willing to leave it ; having found it true of Venice, what Socrates said of Athens, that it was melior meretrix, quam Uxor ; a fine town for a fortnight ; but not to dwell in always ; and this by reason of some stinking channel, bad cellars for wine ; worse water, and the moist air of the sea, not the most wholesome scarcity of earth, even to bury their dead in ; and little fuel for firing. So that finding the four elements wanting here in their purity I was willing to leave these polished Hollanders, and return to Padua."

*James Earl of Perth<sup>1</sup> : Letters to his sister the Countess of Erroll, and other members of his family. (Written 1688-96.)*

Another traveller to be displeased by the situation of Venice was Lord Perth, who visited Italy in 1695 and made frequent use of Lassels' guide-book. " I have been here a fortnight," he wrote to his daughter the Countess Marischall, " and I think I shall be here fifteen or twenty days longer, although I do not very much like the place, for this puddling in a tub continually is no charm to me " ; . . .

James Earl of Perth was then in exile, having been imprisoned and

<sup>1</sup> *James Earl of Perth* (1648-1716), fourth earl, was sworn a privy councillor in 1678, became Justice-General of Scotland in 1682 and Chancellor of Scotland in 1684. His letters cover the period from his imprisonment in 1688 until 1696, when he decided to join the court of James II at St. Germain. He remained there the rest of his life, and was created Duke of Perth and Knight of the Garter. Both his son and his grandson were involved in Stuart plots.

then banished after the fall of James II. As an active supporter of the Stuarts he had attained the high position of Chancellor of Scotland, and on the accession of King James had openly declared himself a Roman Catholic. When the King abdicated he had tried to follow him to the continent, but at the very moment of setting sail he had been captured by a Scottish rabble, barbarously handled, and finally imprisoned in Stirling Castle. The intimate letters to his family in which he describes these ordeals, reveal him as exactly the type of gentleman that Lassels would have admired; courageous, proud, modest, sincerely pious, and possessed of an imperturbable serenity throughout the worst tribulations.

Describing how he was seized from the ship just before it put to sea, he writes to his sister :

"They came aboard like so many furies and asked for me; they searched long and had it not been for the falsehood of one of our men they had gone off again; but one of our people betrayed me, and so they broke open the place where we were hid with hatchets; my wife would have fain got out first to have exposed herself to their fury, but I pulled her back, and then they pulled me out, threw off my hat and periwig, and clapt their bayonets to my breast, for a great while keeping me in the expectation of being murdered."

In another letter written from prison he recalls this incident :

"However, excepting the while that the swords were over my head, and the poignards at my breast, I found no kind of trouble, but rather joy in all my sufferings, and that does so increase that I thank God that I feel a composure much greater and more solid joy in this restraint, in which the sentinel stands at my door from nine at night until the same hour in the morning, who would not the other night permit me to call for help to my wife, though she was like to die of a violent colic. I thank God that I am in an entire peace, at present, waiting until matters proceed as far as that a way may be settled for my trial and death, for the which I look with all certainty."

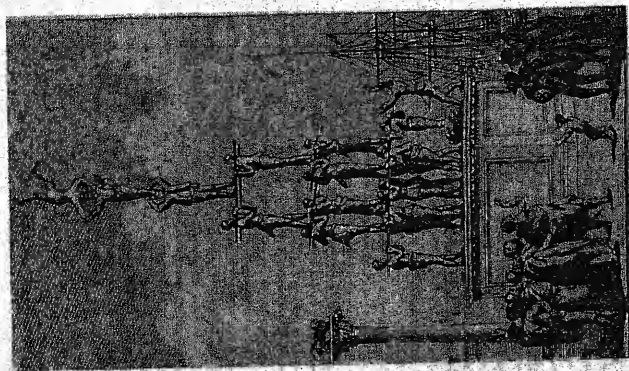
But Lord Perth was not only to escape execution, but to enjoy an agreeable and honourable future. Three and a half years later he was released on condition that he left the country. An unhurried journey with his wife through the Netherlands and Italy to Rome, during which they made many friends, took pleasure in churches, relics, processions, flowers, nightingales, health-giving waters and the admirable Italian music, is recorded in his letters. In Rome he decided to settle down, but after two years he was summoned by James II to his exiled court at St. Germain, where, having been created Duke of Perth and Knight of the Garter, he lived, employed in various high posts in the service of his sovereign, until he died at the age of sixty-eight.

Although Lord Perth cared little for the situation of Venice, his visit was by no means undiverting. Of a less didactic nature than Lassels, he was more interested in the Carnival than the gravity of Venetian noblemen, and his letters give an amiable description of the extravagant amusements and public spectacles of a city which was then the pleasure-resort of Europe :

" We arrived here about three weeks ago. The Carnival took up ten days of it, where we saw what in Scotland would be thought downright madness ; everybody is in mask, a thing of taffeta, called a bahul, is put on the head, which covers one's face to the nose. The upper part is covered by people of quality with a white mask like what the ladies used to tie on with a chin-cloak long ago. The bahul hangs down about the shoulders a hand-breadth below the top of the shoulder. A Venetian nobleman's gown, an Armenian long garment furred, a vest called a Hongrois, which reaches to the knee, furred, or a plain scarlet, is what grave people wear ; others are clothed as they please, some like doctors of law, others with peacocks' trains and hats as broad as six hats, others as harlequins, ladies as country girls, and some as oddly as one's wildest dreams could represent them ; *en fin*, no extravagant conceit can outdo what one sees on St. Mark's Place. Sometimes a company of noblemen and ladies dress themselves up like country people and dance torlanos in the open place, which is the frolick I like the best, for they dance scurvily when they pretend to French or English dances (for here they dance country dances at all their balls). A torlano is somewhat like the way our Highlanders dance, but the women do it much more prettily than the men. Sometimes you shall see a young pair of eyes with a huge nose and a vast beard playing on a guitar and acting like a mountebank. On one hand you shall hear a dispute in physick, turning all into ridiculous ; on the other one, on a subject of law ; some dialogues of mere wit, and things said that are surprising enough. But on the whole matter St. Mark's Place is like a throng of fools. On Shrove Thursday a bull is beheaded by a butcher chosen by his fellows for that feat, and if he does it well in presence of the Doge and all the Senate is treated in *senerissimo*, feasted, and has the best music at supper that can be. He I saw do it did it cleverly at one blow, and did not seem to strain neither. The Doge's guards conducted him to and from the place, and a firework is set on fire in fair daylight. A fellow is drawn up on a flying rope, such as mountebanks use, in a ship about the bigness of a gondola (which is a very long small boat), and all the way he fires guns and throws grenades amongst the people, but they are only paper ones. Then he flies down from the top of St. Mark's steeple, where he had left his gondola. This steeple is disjointed from the church 70 or 80 paces. And thus they divert the people here to amuse them and keep them from framing conceits of



A Venetian courtesan wearing Cioppini.  
From a late sixteenth century engraving.



A human pyramid.  
From an eighteenth century engraving.

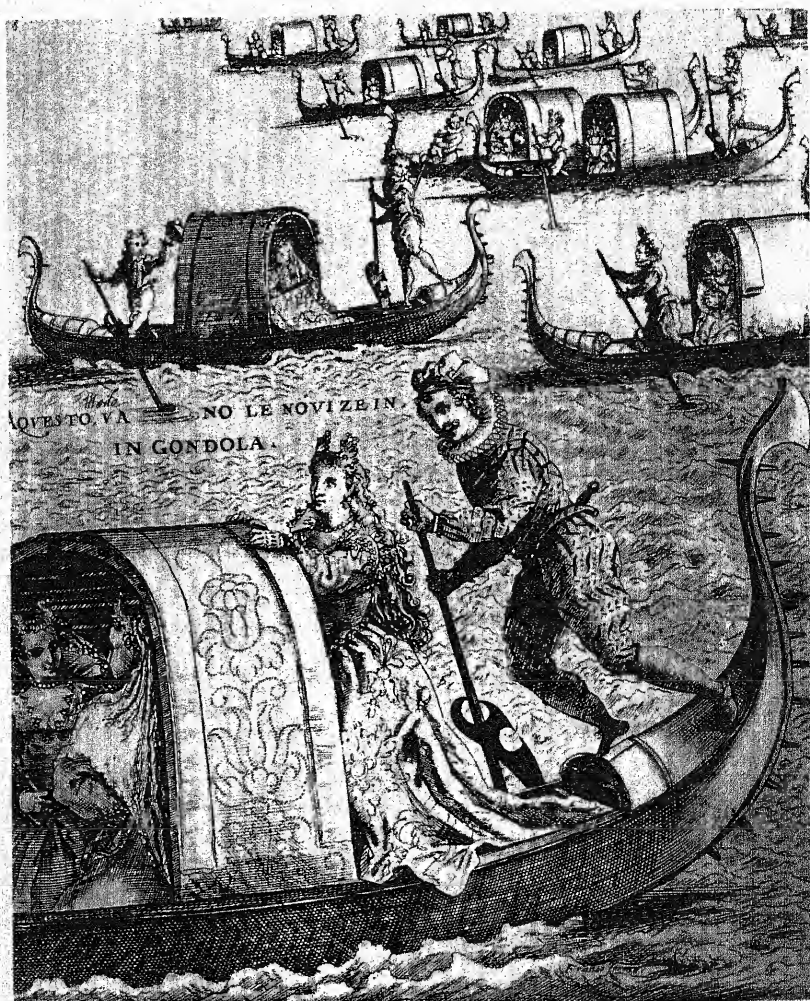


A Venetian lady drying her hair in a solana.  
From a sixteenth century engraving.

These engravings are reproduced by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.



PLATE VI



Venetian girls visiting their relatives in monasteries on the occasion of their betrothals.

*From an early seventeenth century engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*



74328

government and religion, such as our giddy people frame to themselves and make themselves the scorn and reproach of mankind; for now all goes under the name of English, and we are said so changeable and foolish that nothing from our parts seem strange. Beheading, dethroning, and banishing of kings being but children's play with us."

No town had such alluring entertainments as Venice. The mountebanks, reputed the best in Europe, sang, juggled, jested and sold quack remedies night and day in the Place of St. Mark; at the ceremony of the Marriage to the Sea, the air of the lagune was filled with the singing of epithalamiums mingled with the sound of trumpets; masks, so helpful to intrigue, were used not only during the carnival, but on every public occasion, so that young girls commonly went to the fair wearing false noses and little beards of black wool for the convenience of passing unrecognised. But though the people might be distracted from any idea of rebellion, Venice was far from law-abiding, and masked robbers, gliding through the night to waylay wealthy revellers, made the canals even more dangerous than the highwaymen-haunted roads of Europe.

*Observations on a Journey to Naples. (Pub. 1691.)*

The sinister story of the false Venetian anchorite is one of the many scandals related by the anonymous author of this book, a fanatical Protestant clergyman who travelled from Rome to Naples collecting material for anti-Papish propaganda—the baptism of a bell at Veltre, garlanded with flowers, draped in violet velvet and white satin, the frivolity of nuns who made "curious laces and points," "artificial flowers" and "dried sweet meats"—being recorded among other matters more sordid.

"Many hermits have been publicly executed from time to time, for committing the most enormous crimes. There was one of them taken at Venice, who confessed at his death, that he had killed above threescore persons, as well men as women. He had his hermitage between Venice and Buran, in a little island of about two hundred paces in circuit, where is still to be seen the ruins of his hermitage, which they demolished. This wretched person went by night to sea in a disguise, and masked, accompanied with three or four robbers, to whom his hermitage served for a retreat: They went and stopped the gondolas or small boats that past through the channels, and murdered those that refused to surrender their purses. There had been reports abroad, for a considerable time, of great robberies and murders, that were committed about this hermitage; but who could ever have believed, that a person wearing so holy a habit, and so venerable a beard, had been the head and captain of these murderers? He was at last discovered by the sons of a rich merchant of Venice; their father, who took pleasure in the company of such kind of hypocrites,

went one day out of devotion to visit this hermit, and had acquainted his wife and sons with his intent. He carried along with him some very good provisions, to present him with; but this impious wretch being not satisfied with that, after he had got him to enter into his cell, took him by the throat and strangled him. His children being astonished at their fathers staying so long, went with a great many of their friends to look for him, and entering into the hermitage, they found their father's shoes under the hermit's bed; whereupon they immediately seized him, and having found the rest of his clothes in an old cupboard, the hermit at last shewed them the place where he had cast his body; it was a great hole, which formerly had served for a cistern, where they found the bodies of above threescore persons that had been sacrificed to the fury and avarice of this infernal monster."

Joseph Addison, visiting Venice in the first years of the eighteenth century, saw everywhere signs of decay. "This republic," he writes "has been much more powerful than it is at present, as it is still likelier, to sink than increase in its dominions."<sup>1</sup> Trade was "far from flourishing"; the famous arsenal made a "great show," but "a great part of its furniture" had become useless, there being almost as many suits of armour as there were guns. As for the Venetian nobility, their grand manners were out of all proportion to their real position in the world: "The noble Venetians think themselves equal to the electors of the empire, and but one degree below kings; for which reason they seldom travel into foreign countries, where they must undergo the mortification of being treated like private gentlemen."

Nothing flourished except pleasure; there were operas, comedies, and street acrobats who built themselves into human pyramids; masking, during the carnival and "all other high occasions," gave endless opportunities for amorous adventures, and it seemed to Addison that there was "something more intriguing in the amours of Venice than those of other countries." Even the nuns had their operas and their lovers, not stopping at receiving visits from strangers; indeed, it was rumoured that a daughter of the Cornaras had recently refused to admit anyone beneath a prince. But for all this, Addison pitied the Venetians, and wondered that "drinking was so little in vogue among them," seeing that they had "no such diversions as bowling, hunting, walking, riding, and the like exercises to occupy them without doors."

To an energetic, matter-of-fact Englishman, the voluptuous idleness of Venetian life could be even repellent. Dr. John Moore,<sup>2</sup> who visited the

<sup>1</sup>*Remarks on Several parts of Italy in the Years 1701, 1702, 1703.* Joseph Addison (1672-1719), the essayist, travelled in France and Italy 1699-1703.

<sup>2</sup>*Dr. John Moore (1730-1802)*, son of a Scottish minister. A distinguished physician, he attended James George, Duke of Hamilton, until he died of con-

city at the end of the century, remarks : " there is no manner of doubt that a town surrounded by water is a very fine sight ; but a town surrounded by land is much finer. Can there be any comparison in point of beauty, between the dull monotony of a watery surface, and the delightful variety of gardens, meadows, hills and woods ? If the situation at Venice render it less agreeable than another city to behold at a distance, it must render it, in a much stronger degree, less agreeable to inhabit. Instead of walking or riding in the fields, and enjoying the fragrance of herbs, and the melody of birds ; when you wish to take the air at Venice, you must submit to be paddled about, from morning to night, in a narrow boat, along dirty canals ; or if you don't like this, you have one resource more, which is that of walking in St. Mark's Place."

But Dr. Moore was an extreme case ; in the latter part of the century, all travellers, except the most aggressively hearty, were agreed upon the unique attractiveness of Venice. Lady Anne Miller, approaching the city from the sea, was enchanted by her first impressions :

" Drawing near to Venice when the sun was arisen, we perceived the sides of the canals to be prettily embellished with small pleasure-houses, gardens, and coffee-houses ; about eight o'clock the people of one of these latter stepping into our boat brought us coffee, upon which we breakfasted, continuing our voyage at the same time.

" Two o'clock. . . . Venice has appeared before us for three miles past : but now, on our nearer approach, I believe the world cannot produce a more surprising, or more beautiful view ; a city rising out of the bottom of the waves, crowned with glittering spires." . . .

*Lady Anne Miller*<sup>1</sup> : *Letters from Italy*, 1770, 1771.

At the time that Lady Miller made her tour no one any longer took seriously the political pretensions of Venice, or, for that matter, those of any other Italian state. Italy was frankly regarded as a museum, a storehouse of culture which served to please and edify the English educated classes.

These travellers observed its treasures as carefully as Lassels, but their sumption at the age of fifteen. He afterwards travelled abroad in the service of his brother, Douglas, Duke of Hamilton, for five years. He wrote several novels, moral in purpose, and several travel books. *A view of Society and Manners in Italy*, from which this quotation is taken, is a continuation of *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland and Germany*, published 1779.

<sup>1</sup> *Lady Miller* (1741-1781), was a Miss Riggs, heiress to a large fortune. Her *Letters from Italy* were published under a very thin veil of anonymity in 1776. She also wrote a book *On Novelty, and on Trifles and Triflers*. The *bouts rimés* written by her guests at her Parnassus parties were published as *Poetical amusements at a villa near Bath* ; the Duchess of Northumberland, Lord Palmerston, Lord Carlisle, and David Garrick were among the contributors. Horace Walpole described it as " a bouquet of artificial flowers, and ten degrees duller than a magazine."

attention was focussed differently. Taste had superseded scientific curiosity; objects were valued for their appearance rather than for the skill that had gone in making them; beauty, not ingenuity, was the standard of criticism. In consequence pictures and statues were preferred to mechanical toys, and natural landscapes to those elegant distortions of nature which had formed the gardens of the seventeenth century. Paintings were especially esteemed. Collecting pictures had become fashionable since the middle of the century, and when Lady Miller visited Italy almost every English consul was also a picture dealer, deriving considerable and often ill-gotten wealth from the trade.

Lady Miller was one of those ambitious, energetic, and utterly indomitable Englishwomen who will go to any lengths in the pursuit of their chosen aims. An intellectual and social climber, she exploited the contemporary passion for old masters with the most thorough-going determination. Her three volumes of letters, written for the public and published soon after her return to England, form a detailed critical catalogue of all the important paintings in the country, a monumental work in which she displays a striking flair for admiring the best pictures for the worst reasons. Veronese's Rape of Europa, for instance, pleased her because: "The bull is one of the finest and most noble species of that animal, his countenance expresses great tenderness; the most striking beauty in Europa is her naked foot, which is of the most elegant shape and delicacy of flesh."

Unlike most of her contemporaries, she had the discrimination to admire Brueghel, who was at that period usually regarded as a comic barbarian, but her reasons are again disconcerting. Disagreeing with the distinguished art critic Cochin, she liked two little Brueghels painted on copper representing Adam and Eve, but because: "their nice proportions, the dignity and manly expression in the face and limbs of Adam; the delicacy, softness and beautiful simplicity, blended with the innocence which our first mother here expresses (for probably the moment the painter chose was prior to her acquaintance with the devil), renders the character of this picture so amiable, that you may look at it a considerable time, nor find its merit diminish by the most rigid examination."

Her tour of Italy, and her account of it, made her career; during the rest of her life she was in a position to be petted and snubbed by fashionable cultured society. As her enemies lost no chance of pointing out, she had started from nothing: a middle-class heiress, an unknown Miss Riggs, she had married a Captain Miller, a penniless Irish gentleman without position or prospects. But with her instinct for what was fashionable she had laid out her money in building a villa near Bath, a modest enough residence, but placed in a situation ideally suited for the new cult of romantic scenery, and remarkable enough to attract the attention of so accomplished a connoisseur as Horace Walpole. Dining with



the Millers during that unassuming period of their lives, he had thought them "mighty simple civil people," had admired, from the modern bow-window, the beautiful prospect of the Avon falling in a "wide cascade," and their small but pretty garden, laid out in the modern landscape style which had superseded the artificial inventions of the seventeenth century. In his estimation it was "a very diminutive principality, with large pretensions." The pretensions were in fact so large that the need for economy had driven the Millers abroad, first to France, and then on their fateful tour of Italy.

Like so many English people before and since, Lady Miller was transformed by Italy; "Alas!" wrote Horace Walpole four years after her return, summing up his former host and hostess with devastating malice, "Mrs. Miller is returned a beauty, a genius, a Sappho, a tenth Muse, as romantic as Mademoiselle Scudéri, and as sophisticated as Mrs. Vesey. The Captain's fingers are loaded with cameos, his tongue runs over with *virtu*, and that both may contribute to the improvement of their own country, they have introduced *bouts-rimés* as a new discovery." For the little villa had become a new Parnassus, the scene of ponderous neo-Grecian frolics of the type so dear to the smart set of late eighteenth-century England. An antique vase, purchased in Italy, was placed on a laurel-wreathed altar, competitions were held in the composition of *bouts rimés*, the Duchess of Northumberland insisted on writing her contribution on a buttered muffin, and Mrs. Miller—now "Lady Miller," for her husband had somehow acquired a baronetcy since his return—had arrived. "They hold a Parnassus fair every Thursday," wrote Walpole, "give out rhymes and themes, and all the flux of quality at Bath contend for the prizes. A Roman vase dressed in pink ribbons and myrtles receives the poetry, which is drawn out every festival; six judges of these Olympic games retire and select the brightest compositions, which the respective successful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope Miller, kiss her fair hand, and are crowned by it with myrtle, with—I know not what."

Lady Miller, in her less brilliant way, was just as critical as Horace Walpole. To be critical was at that period a common attitude to life, just as scientific curiosity was characteristic of the seventeenth century. The seventeenth-century travellers had moved in a new world, recently expanded by geographical discoveries and advances in knowledge; their desire to investigate, their appetite for information, was so strong as to swamp their personal interests and preferences. But in the eighteenth century the boundaries of knowledge were more stabilised; travellers were less curious, more insistent on being pleased. In this period the dilettante tourist first appears: the egocentric traveller whose purpose is not to transact business or acquire information, but divert himself, who is as much concerned with personal comfort and entertainment as with the arts and sciences, and who judges everything by exacting precon-



ceived standards. Letters and journals, the most personal forms of literary expression, were those used by the best of these travel writers: Horace Walpole, who describes France as brilliantly as his own country, the talented women travel-writers, Lady Mary Wortley Montague and Janet Schaw.

More pedestrian, but by no means unentertaining, Lady Miller is of the same school, a demanding traveller, determined to be comfortable, interested and amused; passing judgment on everything, on paintings, statues, architecture, gardens, "prospects," shops, manners and clothes; complaining of the vile food in the inns—yet somehow always eating it—condemning Le Nôtre's "total want of taste" and the "stiffness" of Claud Lorrain's landscapes, and exchanging civilities with aristocratic Italians and foreign diplomats, with whom she seems to have had a genius for wangling such favours as the loan of apartments, "equipages" and boxes at theatre and opera.

But exacting though she might be, her vitality carried her through all discomforts. The journey to Italy was alone a test of endurance. Travelers entering the country by the Mont Cenis were at that period obliged to cross the pass in hard chairs carried by alarmingly sprightly *porteurs* who had a habit of running down the steepest part of the descent. But Lady Miller enjoyed the adventure, comparing her situation to that of a witch on broomstick. In Rome the task of investigating its "labyrinth" of curiosities proved almost too much for her owing to "an impediment extremely teasing to strangers,"—the custom of shutting the palaces during several hours in the middle of the day. But somehow she got through her programme, tramping about the ruins in the noonday sun when the cool halls and galleries were closed, shading her complexion by means of a "pastboard hat" which she had made herself and trimmed with "pink and blond ribbon," which, she notes complacently, had been the fashion when she had left England the year before. Clothes, however, were never Lady Miller's strong point, if Fanny Burney is to be believed, who described her ten years later, in the days of her Parnassus prime, with perhaps unnecessary cruelty, as: "a round, plump, coarse-looking dame. . . while her aim is to appear an elegant woman of fashion, all her success is to seem an ordinary woman, in very common life, with fine clothes on."

In Venice she and her husband were lodged splendidly though hardly cosily in a suite of vast damask-hung rooms in a private palace, now converted into an hotel of foreign visitors. Their apartment, recently occupied by their friend "Lord L.," was richly furnished; the "outer saloon" was a hundred and twenty feet long, and an inner sitting-room was "a cube of forty."

From the moment of her arrival Lady Miller's days were full. Besides the usual sights of Venice: the church of St. Mark built in "the absurd

old Gothic style of architecture"; the Doge's palace—"a vaste Gothic pile"; and innumerable pictures in palaces and churches, she managed to see—with her usual intrepidity, for she was suffering from a violent colic at the time—the wedding of the Doge's son, a truly impressive ceremony, in which the baroque splendour of dresses, jewels and decorations displayed the full grandeur of Venetian society in this time of magnificent decline.

"I was extremely well pleased that I had not permitted so fine a show to escape me, though afflicted with a tormenting pain in my stomach the whole time. The procession of the gondolas to the church was very fine; the gondoliers, dressed in gold and silver stuffs, made a most brilliant contrast with the blackness of their boats. We got into the church before the bride and bridegroom with their *suite* arrived, where the pillars and walls were covered with crimson damask, fringed with gold; the altar richly adorned with lace and flowers, and the steps up to it spread over with Persian carpets; the whole church was illuminated with large wax tapers though at noon-day.

"As soon as the company were disembarked from their gondolas, they formed themselves into a regular procession; the ladies walked two and two: they were all dressed in thin black silk gowns (excepting the bride), with large hoops; the gowns are straight-bodied, with very long trains, like the *robes de cour* at Versailles; their trains tucked up on one side of the hoop, with a prodigious large tassel of diamonds. . . . Their heads were dressed prodigiously high in a vast number of buckles, and two long drop curls on the neck. A great number of diamond pins and strings of pearl adorned their heads with large *sultanes* or feathers on one side, and magnificent diamond ear-rings.

"The bride was dressed in cloth of silver, made in the same fashion and decorated in the same manner with the other ladies; but her bosom was quite bare, and she had a fine diamond necklace and an enormous bouquet of natural flowers. Her hair was dressed as high as the others, . . . her diamonds were very fine, and in great profusion. . . . The men appeared to me to be all alike; they were dressed in black gowns like lawyers, with immense periwigs."

But the traditional sumptuousness of aristocratic life had by this time become oppressive to many Venetians. Their great palaces, usually furnished with more wealth than taste, were pompously uncomfortable, and those who were civilised enough to prefer ease to ostentation, took to keeping small, simple apartments for their relaxation. Here, in gaily trivial *décor*s, friends could camp out together, and enjoy the favourite Venetian pleasures of staying up all night, conversation, gambling and intrigue.

"The palaces at Venice are much in the same taste; having seen one

or two, you have in a manner seen all. The Venetians cover their walls with pictures, and never think their apartments properly furnished, until they have such as shall fill all the spaces from top to bottom, so as completely to hide the hanging. This being their object, there are in all the collections many more bad pictures than good.

"The *Casinos* . . . are small houses of one or two rooms on a floor ; neatly fitted up, but never fine : those I saw were papered with India paper, and furnished with chintz. It is the fashion here for every person of distinction to have one *Casino* at least, and very frequently more : they have little pleasure in inhabiting their palaces, which are really uncomfortable, and by the plans and dimensions rendered extremely melancholy. A silent and solitary magnificence reigns throughout, interrupted only by the hoarse washing of the sea against the walls, which is not exhilarating to the spirits, you must confess. I suppose it was in search of cheerfulness, recreation and society, that *Casinos* were originally resorted to ; the greater number of them are situated behind St. Mark's Place. Here small *Cotteries* meet, play at cards, generally sup together on some trifle they procure from the pastrycooks-shops and coffee-houses ; and often pass the night in conversation, music, or walking about the Place of St. Mark. I do not pretend to say these *Casinos* are not often made an ill use of :—all I can assert is, that in those to which I was introduced, I neither saw nor heard any thing but what was extremely well bred and liberal ; the smallness of the rooms, and the card-parties, prevent the formality of a circle. The society was composed of people who seemed perfectly well acquainted with each other, and who showed us the kindest attention as strangers."

In this period of heavy luxury there was real elegance in such minor arts as millinery and window dressing. In the little streets round the Piazza, where the smart society wandered restlessly half the night, the shops made an enchanting display :

"The street of the silversmiths makes a splendid show, there being no other sort of shops in it. That of the milliners is like a *parterre* of flowers, the goods, of the most glowing colours, being ingeniously mixed in such a manner in the windows, as to produce a striking effect. Other streets consist solely of poulterers, and some of green-grocers shops for all kinds of garden stuff : these last are dressed in such a manner, as discovers a surprising taste in the common people ; a perfect neatness reigns throughout, and I observed that ideas drawn from architecture were the favourite fancies of the gardeners, who pile up cabbages, lettuces, etc., as columns, and form their capitols, friezes, etc., of turnips, carrots, and celery ; the flowers and herbs are linked together, and disposed in festoons after the antique."

In this very sophisticated Venetian world, life was easy and informal, clothes delightfully frivolous, immorality conveniently included in convention. As in the Paris of the late eighteenth century described by Walpole, few privileges were accorded to youth; the pursuit of pleasure could be extended, without fear of mockery, right through old-age until the grave.

"The custom of *Cavalieri Serventi* prevails universally here: this usage would appear in a proper light, and take off a great part of the odium thrown upon the Italians, if the *Cavalieri Serventi* were called husbands; for the real husband, or beloved friend, of a Venetian lady (often for life), is the *Cicisbeo*. The husband married in Church is the choice of her friends, not by any means of the lady. . . .

"The Venetian ladies have a gay manner of dressing their heads, which becomes them extremely when young, but appears very absurd when age has furrowed over their fine skins, and brought them almost to the ground. I felt a shock at first sight of a tottering old pair I saw enter a coffee-house the other evening; they were both shaking with the palsy, leant upon each other, and supported themselves by a crutch-stick; they were bent almost double by the weight of years and infirmities, yet the lady's head was dressed with great care; a little rose-coloured hat, nicely trimmed with blond, was stuck just above her right ear, and over her left was a small mat of artificial flowers; her few grey hairs behind were tied with ribbon, but so thinly scattered over her forehead, that large patches of her shrivelled skin appeared between the parting curls; the *Cavaliere* was not dressed in the same style, all his elegance consisted in an abundance of wig which flowed upon his shoulders. I enquired who this venerable couple were, and learnt, that the gentleman had been the faithful *Cavaliere* of the same lady above forty years; that they had regularly frequented the Place of St. Mark and the coffee-houses, and with the most steady constancy had loved each other, till age and disease were conducting them hand in hand together to the grave."

At the eastern end of the Mediterranean, Turkey, the centuries-old enemy of Venice, with a civilisation equally luxurious, had fallen into a more disastrous decadence. Faced with repeated and humiliating defeats in the war with Russia, the Sultan rose to this crisis in the history of his empire by issuing decrees to regulate, even more strictly than before, the clothing and veiling of women, and by ordering from the glass works at Venice a particularly gaudy suite of furniture to be made from his own design.

"At the above-mentioned manufactory, they showed us complete furniture for a room in the Grand Signior's seraglio, which had been bespoke at Venice, and made exactly to the orders received from the

*Porte.* The most remarkable article was the principal sofa ; it was not raised above four inches from the ground, the back and arms carved and gilt, its carving forming curves and scrolls, and the back rising to the height of about eight feet. In the moulding were inserted or inlaid, broad pieces of thick blue glass (not cut), and here and there small oval and round looking glasses, so placed as to reflect with variety every contiguous object. It was covered with fine Lyons gold silk, and was to have three or four mattresses of the same. Though in description this sofa may not strike you as pretty, yet the effect was really so and very odd ; as the sculpted wood, which formed and guided the plan of the whole, was elegantly executed, and designed in a good taste."

*William Beckford*<sup>1</sup> ; *Italy, with sketches of Spain and Portugal.* (Pub. 1834.)

William Beckford, celebrated during his life as a glamorous dilettante, a wealthy and slightly shocking eccentric, appears to posterity as an artist. Cultivating the fashionable tastes of the late eighteenth century, he raised them to the status of art ; the revival of the long-despised Gothic architecture, seen in the jiggery-pokery of Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill, in his hands took the superb, if precarious form of Fonthill Abbey ; the craze for oriental fancy dress and sickly-sweet Persian tales produced the splendid sombre fantasy *Vathek*. In his travel books, the contemporary cults of ancient Greece, of wild scenery, of the romantic beauty of mystery, sorrow and decay, inspire some of the most sensitive prose in all English travel literature.

An unsurpassed picture of Venice in decline is created by this early romantic writer ; of a city fading away into a vaporous, dream-like existence, with music floating out of the sparkling dusk, water rippling at dawn, priests and monks, invariably old, pottering and muttering among their flowers beneath the glorious renaissance domes and arches, and of noble Venetians, faint as ghosts, wasted by long indulgence in excess, helplessly drifting through their nightly routine of pleasure.

Leaving Mestre, full of " grand villas and gardens peopled with statues," he approached Venice by water :

<sup>1</sup>*William Beckford* (1760-1844), was wealthy, talented and eccentric. In his youth he studied architecture under Sir William Chambers and music under Mozart. He wrote *Vathek* in French, which was translated in to English by the Rev. Samuel Henly and appeared 1786. In 1834 he published *Italy* ; with sketches of Spain and Portugal ; in 1835 *Recollections of an Excursion to the Monasteries of Alcobaca and Batalha* ; both books were written years earlier. Fonthill Abbey, built at colossal expense, was one of the most inspiring of neo-Gothic buildings ; unfortunately one of its towers, 260 feet high, collapsed, partly destroying it. His collections of books, pictures and *objets d'art* were famous.



"The air was calm ; the sky cloudless ; a faint wind just breathing upon the deep, lightly bore its surface against the steps of a chapel in the island of San Secondo, and waved the veil before its portal, as we rowed by and coasted the walls of its garden overhung with fig-trees and surmounted by spreading pines. The convent discovers itself through their branches, built in a style somewhat morisco, and level with the sea, except where the garden intervenes.

"We were now drawing very near the city, and a confused hum began to interrupt the evening stillness ; gondolas were continually passing and repassing, and the entrance of the Canal Reggio, with all its stir and bustle, lay before us."

Like Lady Miller, he found himself lodged in a huge apartment. From the balcony, green with climbing plants and orange-trees, he watched the passing gondolas :

"As night approached, innumerable tapers glimmered through the awnings before the windows. Every boat had its lantern, and the gondolas moving rapidly along were followed by tracks of light, which gleamed and played upon the waters. I was gazing at these dancing fires when the sounds of music were wafted along the canals, and as they grew louder and louder, an illuminated barge, filled with musicians, issued from the Rialto, and stopping under one of the palaces, began a serenade, which stilled every clamour and suspended all conversation in the galleries and porticos ; till, rowing slowly away, it was heard no more. The gondoliers catching the air, imitated its cadences, and were answered by others at a distance, whose voices, echoed by the arch of the bridge, acquired a plaintive and interesting tone. I retired to rest, full of the sound ; and long after I was asleep, the melody seemed to vibrate in my ear."

He was awoken the next morning at dawn :

"It was not five o'clock before I was aroused by a loud din of voices and splashing of water under my balcony. Looking out, I beheld the grand canal so entirely covered with fruit and vegetables, on rafts and in barges, that I could scarcely distinguish a wave. Loads of grapes, peaches, and melons arrived, and disappeared in an instant, for every vessel was in motion ; and the crowds of purchasers hurrying from boat to boat, formed a very lively picture. Amongst the multitudes, I remarked a good many whose dress and carriage announced something above the common rank ; and upon inquiry I found they were noble Venetians, just come from their *casinos*, and met to refresh themselves with fruit, before they retired to sleep for the day.

"Whilst I was observing them, the sun began to colour the balustrades of the palaces, and the pure exhilarating air of the morning drawing me

abroad, I procured a gondola, laid in my provision of bread and grapes, and was rowed under the Rialto, down the grand canal to the marble steps of S. Maria della Salute. . . . The great bronze portal opened whilst I was standing on the steps which lead to it, and discovered the interior of the dome, where I expatiated in solitude ; no mortal appearing except an old priest who trimmed the lamps and muttered a prayer before the high altar, still wrapt in shadows. The sun-beams began to strike against the windows of the cupola just as I left the church and was wafted across the waves to the spacious platform in front of St. Giorgio Maggiore, one of the most celebrated works of Palladio. . . . ”

From this “ peaceful platform ” he looked across at the “ palaces, porticoes and towers ” of the city, reflected on its greatness in the days when Frederick Barbarossa ended his long quarrel with the Pope by his submission at the Treaty of Venice. Wandering through the church and monastery, admiring the architecture and paintings, the garden and the delicacies of the refectory table, he speculated on the possible revival of Venice ; then, re-embarking in his gondola, he was conveyed to Palladio's great church, Il Redentore.

“ Full of prophecies and bodings, I moved slowly out of the cloisters ; and, gaining my gondola, arrived, I know not how, at the flights of steps which lead to the Redentore, a structure so simple and elegant, that I thought myself entering an antique temple, and looked about for the statue of the God of Delphi, or some other graceful divinity. A huge crucifix of bronze soon brought me to times present.

“ The charm being thus dissolved, I began to perceive the shapes of rueful martyrs peeping out of the niches around, and the bushy beards of Capuchin friars wagging before the altars. These good fathers had decorated the nave with orange- and citron-trees, placed between the pilasters of the arcades ; and on grand festivals, it seems, they turn the whole church into a bower, strew the pavement with leaves, and festoon the dome with flowers.

“ I left them occupied with their plants and their devotions. It was midday, and I begged to be rowed to some woody island, where I might dine in shade and tranquility. My gondoliers shot off in an instant ; but, though they went at a very rapid rate, I wished to advance still faster, and getting into a bark with six oars, swept along the waters, soon left the Zecca and San Marco behind ; and, launching into the plains of shining sea, saw turret after turret, and isle after isle, fleeting before me. A pale greenish light ran along the shores of the distant continent, whose mountains seemed to catch the motion of my boat, and to fly with equal celerity.

“ I had not much time to contemplate the beautiful effects on the water—the emerald and purple hues which gleamed along their surface.

Our prow struck, foaming, against the walls of the Carthusian garden, before I recollected where I was, or could look attentively around me. Permission being obtained, I entered this cool retirement, and putting aside with my hands the boughs of figs and pomegranates, got under an ancient bay-tree on the summit of little knoll, near which several tall pines lift themselves up to the breezes."

There he passed the day—"deeply engaged with the winds, and a thousand associations excited by my Grecian fancies" from which he was only disturbed by the monks, who, serving him a midday meal of fruit and wine, insisted on discussing the American War and Lord George Gordon. But during the afternoon he was left to rest in peace :

"The rustling of the pines had the same effect as the murmurs of other old story-tellers, and I dozed undisturbed till the people without, in the boat, . . . began a sort of chorus in parts, full of such plaintive modulation, that I still thought myself under the influence of a dream, and, half in this world and half in the other, believed, like the heroes of Fingal, that I had caught the music of the spirits of the hill.

"When I was thoroughly convinced of the reality of these sounds, I moved towards the shore whence they proceeded : a glassy sea lay before me ; no gale ruffled the expanse ; every breath had subsided, and I beheld the sun go down in all its sacred calm. . . . I stepped into my boat, and now instead of encouraging the speed of the gondoliers, begged them to abate their ardour, and row me lazily home. They complied, and we were near an hour reaching the platform in front of the ducal palace, thronged as usual with a variety of nations."

St. Mark's seemed to him "a great mosque," so oriental was its appearance, with its cupolas, slender pinnacles, and semicircular arches. The Piazza he thought the "most noble assemblage ever exhibited by architecture," and envied Petrarch, who had witnessed a tournament held in this "princely opening."

Passing through a "labyrinth of pillars," he went into the principal court of the ducal palace, of which only the outline was visible at this twilight hour :

"The colossal statues of Mars and Venus guard the entrance, and have given the appellation of *scala dei giganti* to the steps below, which I mounted not without respect ; and leaning against the balustrades, formed like the rest of the building of the rarest marbles, contemplated the tutelary divinities.

"My admiration was shortly interrupted by one of the *sbirri*, or officers of police, who take their stands after sunset before the avenues of the palace, and who told me the gates were on the point of being closed.

So, hurrying down the steps, I left a million of delicate sculptures unexplored ; . . . The various portals, the strange projections ; in short the striking irregularity of these stately piles, delighted me beyond idea ; and I was sorry to be forced to abandon them so soon, especially as the twilight, which bats and owls love not better than I do, enlarged every portico, lengthened every collonade, and increased the dimensions of the whole, just as imagination desired. The faculty would have had full scope had I but remained an hour longer. The moon would then have gleamed upon the gigantic forms of Mars and Neptune, and discovered the statues of ancient heroes emerging from the gloom of their niches."

As it was, the *sbirri* thought him distracted, "stalking proudly like an actor in an ancient Grecian tragedy, lifting up his hands to the consecrated fanes and images around, expecting the reply of his attendant chorus, and declaiming the first verses of the *Œdipus Tyrannus*," and soon put a stop to this performance, driving him out into the *Piazza*. There he wandered through the perennial crowd of oriental merchants and mountebanks, until he ran into a friend who took him to one of those tinsel pleasure houses, a *casino* of a great Venetian family.

"Whilst the higher ranks were solacing themselves in their *casinos* the rabble were gathered in knots round the strollers and mountebanks singing and scaramouching in the middle of the square. I observed a great number of Orientals amongst the crowd, and heard Turkish and Arabic muttering in every corner. . . .

"I was entering into a grand harum-scarum discourse with some Russian counts or princes, or whatever you please, just landed with dwarfs, and footmen, and governors, and staring like me, about them, when Madame de Rosenberg arrived, to whom I had the happiness of being recommended. She presented me to some of the most distinguished of the Venetian families at their great *casino*, which looks into the *Piazza*, and consists of five or six rooms, fitted up in gay flimsy taste, neither rich nor elegant, where were a great many lights, and a great many ladies negligently dressed, their hair falling very freely about them, and innumerable adventures written in their eyes. The gentlemen were lolling upon the sofas or lounging about the apartments.

"The whole assembly seemed upon the verge of gaping, until coffee was carried round. This magic beverage diffused a temporary animation ; and, for a moment or two, conversation moved on with a degree of pleasing extravagance ; but the flash was soon dissipated, and nothing remained save cards and stupidity.

"In the intervals of shuffling and dealing, some talked over the affairs of the grand council with less reserve than I expected ; and two or three of them asked some feeble questions about the late tumults in



London. It was one o'clock before all the company were assembled, and I left them at three, still dreaming over their coffee and card-tables. *Treize* is their favourite game : *uno, due, tre, quattro, cinque, fante, cavallo, re*, are eternally repeated ; the apartments echoed no other sound.

"I wonder a lively people can endure such monotony ; for I have been told the Venetians are remarkably spirited ; and so eager in the pursuit of amusement as hardly to allow themselves any sleep. Some, for instance, after declaiming in the Senate, walking an hour in the square, and fidgeting about from one *casino* to another till morning dawns, will get into a gondola, row across the Lagunes, take the post to Mestre or Fusina, and jumble over craggy pavements to Treviso, breakfast in haste, and rattle back again as if the Devil were charioteer : by eleven the party is restored to Venice, resumes robe and periwig, and goes to council.

"This may be very true, and yet I will never cite the Venetians as examples of vivacity. Their nerves, unstrung by early debaucheries, allow no natural flow of lively spirits, and at best but a few moments of a false and feverish activity. The approaches of sleep, forced back by immoderate use of coffee, render them weak and listless, and the facility of being wafted from place to place in a gondola, adds not a little to their indolence. In short, I can scarcely regard their Eastern neighbours in a more lazy light, who, thanks to their opium and their harems, pass their lives in one perpetual dose."

It was natural enough that the great figure of English romanticism, Lord Byron, should have chosen Venice for his notorious exile. No setting could have been more congenial to the sinister idolised outcast of London society than this scene of crumbling splendour and muffled vice.

Venice, by that time, had sunk below even that state of dreaming decadence that Beckford loved. Conquered by Napoleon, bandied for many years between France and Austria, it had finally been assigned to the Austrians, and now, no longer a proud republic but a pleasure resort, its traditional exclusiveness, the dignified and exotic façade which had impressed travellers for so many centuries, was shattered by an invasion of tourist-conquerors from the north.

In this period, when the city was riddled by sightseers, and Byron one of the principal sights, Thomas Moore, his friend and biographer, paid him a visit,<sup>1</sup> was captivated by the unique personality which never failed to sustain his reputation, was shocked, but fascinated, by his ramshackle grandeur, his disrespectful gaiety, and his vulgar, but somehow disarming, ostentation.

<sup>1</sup> in 1819.



*Thomas Moore*<sup>1</sup>; *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of his Life.*  
(Pub. 1830.)

Moore found his "noble friend" at La Mira, just outside Venice, where he was at that time living with the Countess Guiccioli. It was two o'clock in the afternoon when he arrived, and Byron was just getting up for breakfast. Together they proceeded to Venice, where Byron, over-riding Moore's understandable desire for the modest amenities of the Gran Bretagna hotel, swept him into his own disconcerting but glamorous way of life :

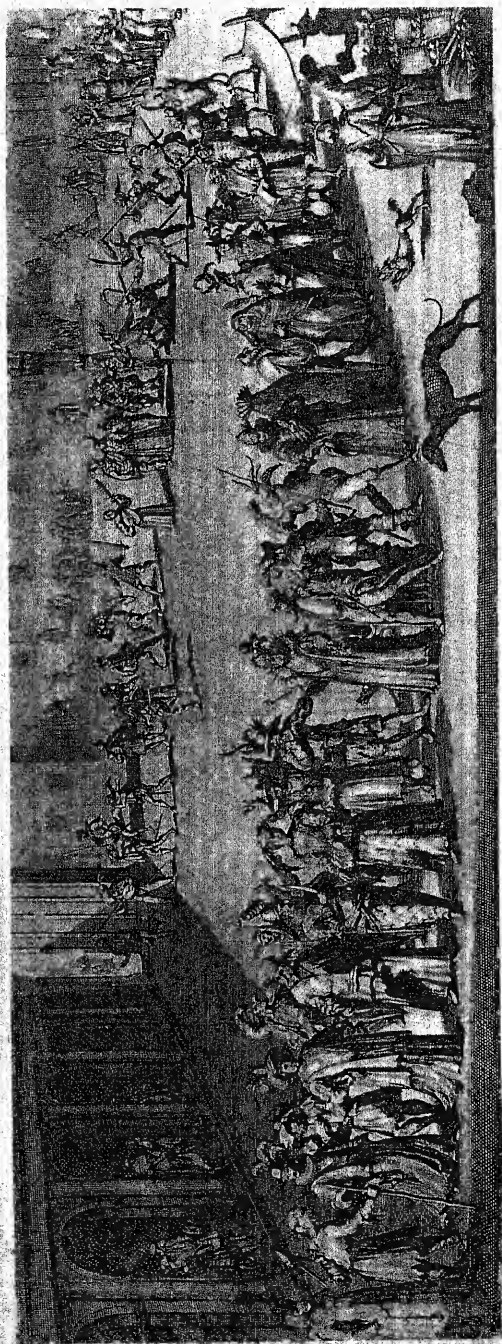
"As we proceeded across the Lagoon in his gondola, the sun was just setting, and it was an evening such as Romance would have chosen for a first sight of Venice, rising 'with her tiara of bright towers' above the wave ; while, to complete, as might be imagined, the solemn interest of the scene, I beheld it in company with him who had lately given a new life to its glories, and sung of that fair City of the Sea thus grandly :—

'I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs ;  
A palace and a prison on each hand :  
I saw from out the wave her structure rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :  
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
Around me, and a dying glory smiles  
O'er the far times, when many a subject land  
Look'd to the winged lion's marble piles,  
Where Venice sat in state, throned in her hundred isles.'

"But whatever emotions the first sight of such a scene might, under other circumstances, have inspired me with, the mood of mind in which I now viewed it was altogether the very reverse of what might have been expected. The exuberant gaiety of my companion, and the recollections—anything but romantic—into which our conversation wandered, put at once completely to flight all poetical and historical associations ; and our course was, I am almost ashamed to say, one of uninterrupted merriment and laughter till we found ourselves at the steps of my friend's palazzo on the Grand Canal. All that had ever happened of gay or ridiculous—during our London life together—his scrapes and my lecturings,— . . . all was passed rapidly in review between us, and with a flow of humour and hilarity, on his side of which it would have been difficult, even for persons far graver than I can pretend to be, not to have caught the contagion.

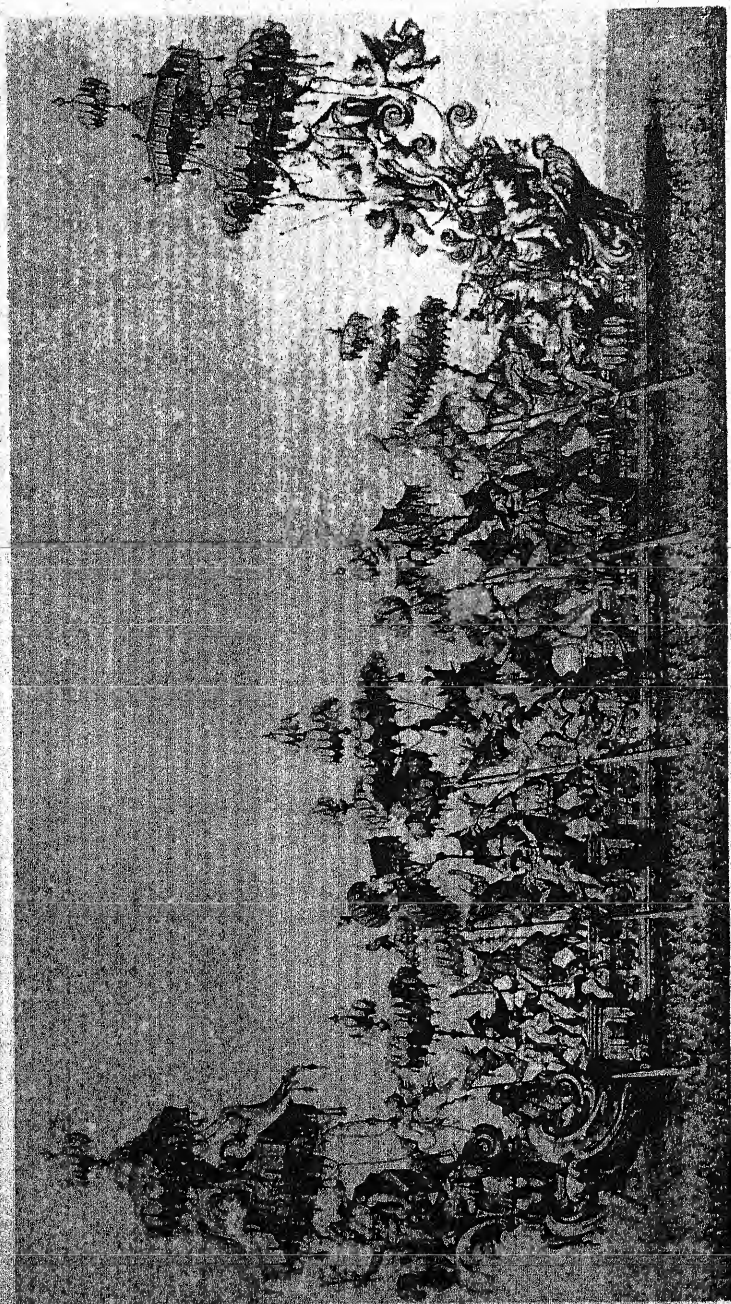
"He had all along expressed his determination that I should not

<sup>1</sup> *Thomas Moore* (1779-1852), born in Dublin. He wrote much poetry, and the biographies of Sheridan and Byron.



A Venetian carnival in the eighteenth century.  
*From a contemporary engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE VIII



The Triumph of China: a fantastic gondola designed by Alessandro Mauro for a water pageant in 1716.  
*From the original design in the Museo Civico, Venice. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

go to any hotel, but fix my quarters at his house during the period of my stay ; . . . As we now turned into the dismal canal, and stopped before his damp-looking mansion, my predilection for the Gran Bretagna returned in full force ; and I again ventured to hint that it would save an abundance of trouble to let me proceed thither. But 'No—no,' he answered, 'I see you think you'll be very uncomfortable here ; but you'll find that it is not quite so bad as you expect.'

"As I groped my way after him through the dark hall, he cried out, 'Keep clear of the dog !' and before we had proceeded many paces farther, 'Take care, or that monkey will fly at you' ; . . . Having escaped these dangers, I followed him up the staircase to an apartment destined for me. All this time he had been dispatching servants in various directions. . . .

"When we had reached the door of the apartment it was discovered to be locked, and, to all appearance, had been so for some time, as the key could not be found ;—a circumstance which, to my English apprehension, naturally connected itself with notions of damp and desolation, and again I sighed inwardly for the Gran Bretagna. Impatient at the delay of the key, my noble host, with one of his humorous maledictions, gave a vigorous kick to the door and burst it open ; on which we at once entered into an apartment not only spacious and elegant, but wearing an aspect of comfort and habitableness which to a traveller's eye is as welcome as it is rare. 'Here,' he said, in a voice whose every tone spoke kindness and hospitality,—'these are the rooms I use myself, and here I mean to establish you.'

"He had ordered dinner from some *tratteria*, and while waiting its arrival . . . we stood out on the balcony, in order that, before daylight had quite gone, I might have some glimpses of the scene which the Canal presented. Happening to remark, in looking at the clouds, which were still bright in the west, that 'what had struck me in Italian sunsets was that peculiar rosy hue'—I had hardly pronounced the word 'rosy,' when Lord Byron, clapping his hand on my mouth said, with a laugh, 'Come, d—n it, Tom, *don't* be poetical.' Among the few gondolas passing at the time, there was one at some distance, in which sat two gentlemen, who had the appearance of being English ; and observing them to look our way, Lord Byron putting his arms a-kimbo, said, with a sort of comic swagger, 'Ah ! if you, John Bulls, knew who the two fellows are, now standing up here, I think you would stare.'

There was some excuse for this assumption ; during his visit Moore observed that when they disembarked at the Lido to mount their horses for their daily ride, a crowd of tourists would be waiting to catch a glimpse of the great Lord Byron, and that "it was amusing in the



extreme to witness the excessive coolness with which ladies, as well as gentlemen, would advance within a very few paces of him, eyeing him, some with their glasses, as they would have done a statue in a museum, or the wild beasts at Exeter 'Change.' "

Venice, like the Near East, has unfailingly appealed to the various types of romantic sensibility which have evo'ved, successive'y, since the end of the eighteenth century. Beckford, inspired by the early, graceful, cultured brand of romanticism, enjoyed the dreaming twilight of the city in decline ; Byron, hero of the lurid, melodramatic, orthodox romantic period, relished its vices and decadence ; Ruskin, of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, which canalised the confused romantic impulses of Victorian England, glorified the city in the monumental, idealistic manner of his time. The most irrational of the Pre-Raphaelites, combining in himself many conflicting enthusiasms—for sumptuous adornment in art, and for absolute truth to nature, for socialism and for chivalry, for mediæval piety and the daring contemporary cult of æstheticism—he sought to prove, by detailed analysis of Venetian architecture, that the excellence of mediæval art corresponded to an " admirableness " in mediæval life. But his thesis remains unconvincing ; the *Stones of Venice* seems less a " sermon in stones " than an attempt to reproduce, in flamboyant prose, the ornate beauty of pre-renaissance architecture. Yet his famous description of St. Mark's creates the impression not of the magnificent elaboration of the building, but rather of a piece of Victorian furniture, one of those preposterously carved sideboards or mantelpieces of the Great Exhibition in which every detail is laboriously executed without reference to the general effect.

*John Ruskin*<sup>1</sup> ; *The Stones of Venice*. (Pub. 1851-3.)

... " A yard or two farther, we pass the hostelry of the Black Eagle . . . , and so presently emerge on the bridge and *Campe San Moisè*, whence the entrance into St. Mark's Place, called the *Bocca di Piazza* (mouth of the square), the Venetian character is nearly destroyed, first by the frightful façade of San Moisè, which we will pause another time to examine, and then by the modernising of the shops as they near the Piazza, and the mingling with the lower Venetian populace of lounging groups of English and Austrians. We will push fast through them into the shadow of the pillars at the end of the *Bocca di Piazza*, and then forget them all ; for between those pillars there opens a great light, and, in the midst of it, as we advance slowly, the vast tower of St. Mark seems to lift itself

<sup>1</sup>*John Ruskin* (1819-1900), writer, critic and artist. His theories on art, were evolved from his detailed study of Italian painting, sculpture and architecture.



visibly forth from the level field of chequered stones : and, on each side, the countless arches prolong themselves into ranged symmetry, as if the rugged and irregular houses that pressed together above us in the dark alley had been struck back into sudden obedience and lovely order, and all their rude casements and broken walls had been transformed into arches charged with goodly sculpture, and fluted shafts of delicate stone.

“ And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away ; a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of coloured light ; a treasure-heap it seems, partly of gold, and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory,—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm-leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes ; and, in the midst of it, the solemn forms of angels, sceptred, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentinespotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, ‘ their bluest veins to kiss ’—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand ; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross ; and above them, in the broad archivolts, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels, and the signs of heaven, and the labours of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth ; and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breath of golden strength, and the St. Mark’s lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst. ”

If this gives but a chaotic idea of St. Mark’s, his description of the *Piazza* is horridly clear, obvious as a Victorian engraving, and with the

same inexplicable nasty attractiveness : a conventional nineteenth-century picture of overstuffed bourgeois regaled by martial music, while the criminal urchins of the lower orders, and the inevitable undeserving poor, sprawl, in appropriate abandonment, at their feet—a picture of the famous *Piazza*, the centuries-old haunt of merry jugglers, gorgeous orientals, stately senators and masked revels, which is indeed a convincing proof of the degradation of Venice at that time.

“ And what effect has this splendour on those who pass beneath it ? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark's, and you will not see an eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters ; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats—‘not of them that sell doves’ for sacrifice, but of the vendors of toys and caricatures. Round the whole square in front of the church there is almost a continuous line of *cafés*, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge, and read empty journals ; in its centre the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes,—the march drowning the *Miserere*, and the sullen crowd thickening round them,—a crowd which, if it had its will, would stiletto every soldier that pipes to it. And in the recesses of the porches, all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards ; and unregarded children,—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity, and their throats hoarse with cursing,—gamble, and fight, and snarl, and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised centesimi upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and His angels look down upon it continually.”

But even northern conquerors, martial bands, and idealistic mediævalists could not disinfect the heavy atmosphere of four centuries of voluptuous decay. Venice, restored to Italy, has remained a scene of indolent pleasure ; modern visitors, less concerned with the mediæval virtues, resembling more the languishing Venetian revellers of Beckford's day, have been happy to regard it as a museum of renaissance architecture and renaissance vice.

Here Frederick Rolfe, Baron Corvo, tormented genius and great romantic writer, sank with perverse abandonment into the phosphorescent paradise of this ancient underworld. *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, an autobiographical book transparently disguised as fiction, recounts his least disreputable experiences. Although ostensibly a novel, and obviously a work of autobiography, it contains many passages which

may be classed as travel literature. Much of the travel literature of modern writers takes an autobiographical form, and much is embedded in novels as backgrounds which are actually more significant than the stories themselves. Indeed the "travel novel" may be regarded as a distinct type of modern travel literature, providing, like the historical novel, an outlet for modern romanticism.

*Frederick Rolfe,<sup>1</sup> Baron Corvo : The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole.*

In this strange book the true story of how Rolfe nearly starved to death in Venice, wandering, homeless and despairing, through back streets and graveyards, returning every night to the glorious Palladian church of the Gesuati, gives occasion to one of the loveliest descriptions of Venice ever written.

"He went, every evening, to the sermon and the benediction at the church of the Gesuati on the Zattere: first, to pay the prodigious debt of the present to the past—the duty of love and piety to the dead; and, second, for the sake of an hour in quiet sheltered obscurity. The grand palladian temple, prepared for the Month of the Dead, draped in silver and black, with its forest of slim soaring tapers crowned with primrose stars in mid-air halfway up the vault, and the huge glittering constellation aloft in the apse where God, in his Sacrament was enthroned, replenished his beauty-worshipping soul with peace and bliss. The patter of the preacher passed him unheard. His wordless prayer, for eternal rest in the meanest crevice of purgatory, poured forth unceasingly with the prayers of the dark crowd kneeling with him in the dimness below.

On the day of All Saints he strolled carelessly (one would have said)—he successfully accomplished the giddy feat of not staggering (if one must speak accurately)—across the long wooden bridge of barks to the cemetery on the islet of Sanniciale. . . .

He slowly paced along cypress-avenues, between the graves of little children with blue or white standards and the graves of adults marked by more sombre memorials. All around him were patricians bringing sheaves of painted candles and gorgeous garlands of orchids and everlasting, or plebeians on their knees grubbing up weeds and tracing

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Rolfe (1869-1913) wrote beautiful prose for which he received little recognition or reward. A convert to Roman Catholicism, he was permanently embittered because he was not accepted for the priesthood. *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole*, his last work, was posthumously published, having been discovered by A. J. A. Symons, who drew attention to Rolfe's genius in the fascinating biography, *The Quest for Corvo*. Rolfe assumed the title Baron Corvo early in his life, claiming that it had been conferred on him by the gift of an estate from the Duchess of Sforza-Cesarini, an elderly English lady. A preposterously difficult character, he quarrelled with all the many people who befriended him and died in Venice in desperate poverty.

pathetic designs with cheap chrysanthemums and farthing night-lights. Here, were a baker's boy and a telegraph-messenger, repainting their father's grave-post with a tin of black and a bottle of gold. There, were half a dozen ribald venal dishonest licentious young gondolieri, quiet and alone on their wicked knees round the grave of a comrade. And there went Zildo, creeping swiftly somewhere, with an armful of dark red roses hiding his face. . . . .

"It was the eighth day since Nicholas had tasted any food at all. He had a bit of bread in his pocket—a half of one of those biscuit-like rings of the poor, hard as stone, which are so satiating. He had two lire and sixty centesimo also. But he could not eat. The last morsel had nauseated him so cataclysmically. He had tried milk, but it had made him reel. Water, a handful of it, surreptitiously taken, at night, from the fountain in some campo, satisfied him now. . . . .

Stars spangled the blackness of heaven. Over the distant lagoon the Bear prowled away from the Lido, and Orion the Huntsman rushed across the sky between the islands of Burano and Santerasma. Later, the waning moon made shift to rise. The deadly cold and damp struck and unnerved him. 'God, do give me a home,' he sighed, shivering, too stiff to move without crying, all night long.

At 5½ o'clock the black horizon beyond the Lido channel seemed to develop a monstrous interminable blacker wall, with a paler black night behind it, which showed above it. At 6½ o'clock an orange-coloured stripe unrolled itself along the base of the wall which shimmered in deepest greys; and a pink sun peered out of the sea with a certain air of urgency. Another day in this world! Surely he had untied all the strings which bound him here? Had he? Had he? No: not quite all.

He rose, moving delicately to ease his stiffness, till he felt fit and able to ramble, in freedom from remark, on an errand which his angel-guardian indicated for him. Something more seemed to be expected from him. 'Nothing in my hand I bring,' but his hand was not yet empty.

Once again he went towards the cemetery. In Campo Sanzaz-cristomo he bought an armful of white rose-buds with his last coin. Let the forgotten Dead remember him, as he remembered them. Let them.

. . . . .

"By dusk he had strayed southward over the station-bridge into Santacrox and Sampolo. The magnificent bells, and the splendid sweetly-rolling diapason of the organ, in the huge dim church of the Frari, enormously revived him at an early Benediction. He rested there awhile, after, between the shades of Titian and Canova, till intonation of the Vespers of the Dead began. Then, on again—he must not fail

to finish his sequence of nine-days prayer at the church of the Gesuati.

The sermon was nearly over when he entered. A great white hearse reared its pyramid aloft (crowned with a winged orb) in the middle of the crowded fane, where an army of lance-like tapers sprang fearlessly trustful to the height tipped as with auspicious stars. Great was the company of mourners softly illumined below. The voice of the friar in the pulpit ceased. Gentle sad hopeful music poured from the loft, the insisting patience of violins, the throb of 'cellos, the resolute concord of organs, weaving intricate networks of harmony round the faithful voices of men chanting the dirge. Then, the silent asperging and censuring of the mighty bier, and the last prayer for all the dead, '*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine; et lux perpetua luceat eis.*'

"Eternal rest. . . . Everlasting light. . . . It was dark. Where should he find rest? He could not get to Santelena now. There was no way but through the most flaring and crowded parts of the city, and the glances of a mob would send him raving mad. He ought to have economised his forces, to get there before he became so dead-tired—tired, but not yet dead. The time was here when he would cry God mercy-man, never—*Kyrie eleéson*.

"When they closed the church he went up the Zattere, as far as the gated bridge of the Dogonale over Rio della Salute. He rested here by the wood-store, pretending to admire the view across the Canal of Zuecca. But no one approached. Venice itself was tired, and refrained from dissipation on the night of the Day of the Dead."



### 3. CONSTANTINOPLE AND TURKEY

ENGLISHMEN of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, accustomed to those magnified country houses, Hampton Court, Whitehall, St. James' Palace, Placentia—the old royal residence at Greenwich,<sup>1</sup> might well be dazzled by the more ostentatious splendour of renaissance palaces. But the courts of Europe, even of Italy, were commonly regarded as nothing compared with that of Constantinople, the seraglio of the Sultan—the Grand Signior—the universally feared ruler of the Turkish empire. Here, it was reputed, incredible riches of the orient were concealed, for it was a traditional belief that the East harboured unlimited wealth,<sup>2</sup> and extravagant stories of the mythical empire of Prester John,<sup>3</sup> and of the real, but almost inaccessible kingdom of Cathay,<sup>4</sup> were still current in the time of Elizabeth. The first great voyages of discovery were all inspired by this legend of oriental wealth: Bartholomew Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope in search of a sea-route to Cathay<sup>5</sup>; with the same motive Columbus stumbled upon America,<sup>6</sup> and Hugh Willoughby, Richard Chancellor,<sup>7</sup> Martin Frobisher<sup>8</sup> and John Davis<sup>9</sup> sailed the terrible Arctic seas. It was not until the seven-

<sup>1</sup> Greenwich House was a royal residence as early as 1300. It was granted by Henry V to Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter, from whom it passed to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who improved it and named it Placentia. At his death it reverted to the crown, and was later enlarged by Edward IV and Henry VIII. Charles I added the little "Queen's House" for Henrietta Maria by Inigo Jones, but the old palace stood until the time of Charles II, who in 1661 pulled it down and erected a new building designed by Inigo Jones and carried out by his pupil John Webb. The palace was completed by Christopher Wren, and there are later additions by Vanbrugh.

<sup>2</sup> In certain mediæval maps paradise is shown in the East.

<sup>3</sup> A popular legend of the later middle ages. Prester John was supposed to have been a Christian priest-king, ruler of a vast empire in the East. This story may have been based on vague reports of the Buddhist chief, Gur Khan, ruler of the Kara Khitai tribe, who won a great victory over the Medes and Persians. A fantastic account of Prester John was publicised in a forged letter circulated in 1165 addressed to the Emperor of Byzantium, which captured the imagination of Europe, so that subsequent travellers to Asia searched for a prince to whom the legend could be attached. But no satisfactory figure was ever found, and after the fourteenth century Prester John came to be identified with the Christian Emperor of Abyssinia.

<sup>4</sup> During the middle ages China was known as Cathay, the name being derived from Khitai, the kingdom of the Khitan Tatars. Marco Polo, visiting China in the thirteenth century, refers to that part of China north of the Yangtze Kiang, which was under the rule of the Mongol Emperors from the thirteenth century until the middle of the fourteenth, as Cathay, and to the southern part of the country as Mangi. In the sixteenth century, when Europeans first travelled to the Far East by way of the Indian Ocean, it was Mangi—southern China—that they reached, and they continued to search for a north-eastern and a north-western sea passage to the supposed northern kingdom of Cathay. It was not until the early seventeenth century that it was realised that the Cathay mentioned by Marco Polo and southern China were the same country, united under the rule of the Chinese Emperors ever since the expulsion of the Mongols.

teenth century, when English contact with the East was found to have resulted in a monopoly for the East India Company—a small clique of hard-boiled merchants regularly drawing dividends of twenty-two per cent.—that the romantic dream of oriental riches lost its hold on popular imagination.

Meanwhile, with the advances of the Turkish army in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the fabled luxuries of Asia had apparently been brought to the very door of Europe. The Sultan's court, moreover, was doubly glamorous because it was established in the noblest of all cities after Rome, the thousand-year-old capital of the Byzantine empire, the city to adorn which the Emperor Constantine was said to have "unplumed" the western world of its treasures. In the Constantinople of the sixteenth century was concentrated everything which appealed to the imagination of the time: the riches of the orient, long advertised in legend and travellers' tales, and the last remnants of Roman glory, of that antiquity which inspired theatre, masque, sculpture, painting, architecture and poetry from end to end of Europe.

Here the great Turkish Sultans, Mohammed the Conqueror, who captured the city and subdued the Balkans, Soliman the Magnificent, whose victorious armies swept to the very gates of Vienna, intimidated the rulers of Europe. In the royal palace or seraglio, an assembly of kiosks and courts delightfully hidden in gardens sloping to the sea, attended by a vast servile retinue of janissaries, porters, heralds, couriers, physicians, eunuchs, mutes, dwarfs and concubines, they enjoyed a magnificence which indeed hardly fell short of popular rumour, and which did actually owe much to Turkish contacts with the orient, with Persia, and through Persia with the highly developed civilisation of China.

"The first Englishmen to be admitted to this astounding court were three merchants sent by Queen Elizabeth in 1579. This was the era during which Englishmen ventured to every part of the globe<sup>1</sup>: to Russia, Persia, India, the East Indies and China, to West Africa, the West Indies and America, exploring, fighting, negotiating and colonising with one end in view: to open trade by force or by diplomacy, to expand English commerce by any and every means. Queen Elizabeth had much to hope for from the Turkish Sultan: not only a share in the rich trade of the Levant, until then largely controlled by the Venetians, but an ally in her struggle against Spain, the most dangerous of her mercantile rivals. In 1587, the year before the Spanish Armada, she was imploring the Sultan Murad III for support "against the idolator, the King of Spain, who, relying on the help of the Pope and all idola-

<sup>5</sup> In 1487. <sup>6</sup> In 1492. <sup>7</sup> In 1553 in search of the North-east Passage.

<sup>8</sup> 1576-78 in search of the North-west Passage. <sup>9</sup> 1585-87 in search of the North-west passage.

<sup>1</sup> Roughly 1550-1650.

trous princes, designs to crush the Queen of England and then turn his whole power to the destruction of the Sultan and make himself universal monarch." Luckily for her reputation as a Christian ruler, no help was forthcoming.

But her relations with Turkey were none the less beneficial. As a result of the 1579 expedition, the first "capitulations" were signed—concessions ensuring a privileged status to the English merchants in Turkey; the Turkey Company, later known as the Levant Company, was formed to manage this new trade; and it was agreed that an English ambassador should be sent to the court of the Sultan. These must be regarded as exceptional achievements, considering the difficulties and delays that England was to experience in her dealings with other oriental potentates: the fanatical hostility of the Shahs of Persia, the shilly-shallying of Jahangir, the Great Moghul, before granting English merchants reasonable security in India, and the absolute haughty refusal of the Emperors of China, during more than two centuries, to admit an English ambassador, or to allow any but the most limited and penalising trading arrangements.

The Levant Company was one of the great chartered trading companies founded during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries which were to influence the history and culture of England during the next two hundred years. The lives and properties of Englishmen being protected against the heathen prejudices of the Turks, merchants, ambassadors and their suites, and later, writers, scholars and tourists, freely visited the country, bringing home oriental tastes and fashions, and glowing, sometimes lyrical descriptions of Constantinople. This enthusiasm lasted until the latter part of the eighteenth century, for the glamour of Constantinople long outlived its material glory. The Ottoman Empire had reached its zenith in the reign of Solieman the Magnificent; English travellers only saw Turkey in the process of decline. But as in Venice, the utmost refinement of living was developed during a period of failure and decay. While the empire crumbled, while Turkish internal politics pursued a bloody and disastrous course, travellers continued to be dazzled by Constantinople; and it was not until the scientific advances of the West had created new standards of life that they came to despise it.

*The Voyage of the Susan of London to Constantinople, wherein the worshipful M. William Harebone was sent first Ambassador unto Sultan Murad Can, the greate Turke, with whom he continued as her Majesties Ligier almost six years. (1582.) (Published in Hakluyt's<sup>1</sup> Principal Navigations.)*

Three years after the first expedition to Constantinople, the newly-

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hakluyt (c.1553-1616), clergyman and geographer. Fascinated by cosmography from his youth, he devoted his life to encouraging English maritime enterprise. His chief work, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries*

formed Turkey Company, then consisting of four members, sent a trading ship to Constantinople, which also carried the first English ambassador, William Harebone, one of the three merchants who had originally approached the Sultan.

Sultan Murad III was one of the typically monstrous figures of Turkish history, a tyrant who ruled his empire in intervals between debauchery and palace intrigues, and who had secured the throne by murdering his five younger brothers. In dealing with this formidable monarch, flattery was prudently judged the best weapon. William Harebone arrived laden with presents, the finest that England could provide. These gifts, however,—hunting dogs, drinking mugs in the form of popinjays a silver clock decorated with pastoral and hunting scenes—seem rather pathetic amid the inhuman pomp of the Turkish court, the offerings of a rural and unsophisticated people. With touching amazement, one of the gentlemen of Harebone's suite describes their reception in an outer court of the seraglio: the banquet of rich and unfamiliar food, the elaborate costumes, the huge sacks of money, the obsequious ceremonies, and the ambassador's respectful entry, after a long wait, into the presence of the Great Turk.

"Thus the ambassador and his gentlemen sat still, and to the southward of them was a door whereat the great Turk himself went in and out at, and on the south side of that door sat on a bench all his chief lords and gentlemen, and on the north side of the west gate stood his guard, in number as I guess them a thousand men. These men have on their heads round caps of metal like skulls, but sharp in the top, in this they have a bunch of ostrich feathers, as big as a brush, with the corner or edge forward: at the lower end of these feathers was there a smaller feather, like those that are commonly worn here. Some of his guard had small staves, and most of them were weaponed with bows and arrows. Here they waited, during our abode at the court, to guard their Lord.

After the ambassador with his gentlemen had sitten an hour and more, there came three or four chauses, and brought them into the great Turk's presence. At the Privy chamber door two noblemen took the ambassador by each arm one, and put their fingers within his sleeves, and so brought him to the great Turk where he sumptuously sat alone. He kissed his hand and stood by until all the gentlemen were

*of the English Nation*, is a collection of accounts of English voyages from the fabulous conquest of Iceland by King Arthur to the discoveries of his own day. The book first appeared in 1589, and an enlarged edition in 1598-1600. His last publication, in 1609, a translation of Fernando de Soto's discoveries in Florida, entitled: *Virginia Richly Valued by the Description of Florida, her next neighbour*, was designed to promote the newly-founded colony of Virginia, in which he was a shareholder. His work was rewarded by many preferments, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.



brought before him in like manner, one by one, and led backwards again, his face towards the Turk ; for they might neither tarry nor turn their backs, and in like manner returned the ambassador. The salutation that the nobleman did, was taking them by the hands. All this time they trod on cloth of gold, most of the noblemen that sat on the south side of the Privy chamber sat likewise on cloth of gold. Many officers or janissaries there were with staves, who kept very good order, for no Turk whatsoever might go any further than they willed him.

At our ambassador's entering they followed that bare his presents, to say : twelve fine broad cloths ; two pieces of fine holland ; ten pieces of plate double gilt ; one case of candlesticks, the case whereof was very large, and three foot high and more ; two very great cans or pots, and one lesser ; one basin and ewer ; two popinjays of silver, the one with two heads—they were to drink in ; two bottles with chains ; three mastiffs in coats of red cloth ; three spaniels ; two bloodhounds ; one common hunting hound ; two greyhounds ; two little dogs in coats of silk ; one clock valued at five hundred pounds sterling—over it was a forest with trees of silver, among the which were deer chased, with dogs, and men on horseback following, men drawing of water, others carrying mine oar on barrows, on the top of the clock stood a castle, and on the castle a mill. All these were of silver. And the clock was round beset with jewels. All the time that we stayed at the council chamber door they were telling and weighing of money to send into Persia for his soldiers pay. There were carried out an hundred and three and thirty bags, and in every bag, as it was told us, one thousand ducats, which amounteth. . . . in sterling English money to fourscore and nineteen thousand pounds."

One of the concessions obtained by the ambassador was the release, in 1588, of a number of Englishmen enslaved and imprisoned by the Turks. Among these appears to have been Edward Webbe, a typical Elizabethan traveller, not of the type who sailed the world on Her Majesty's audacious business to be knighted on their return, but one of the independent adventurers of the period, who roamed the world as sailors, merchants, soldiers of fortune or plain gangsters, who swaggered into every danger as a matter of honour, who took more pride in their misfortunes than their escapes, boasting with perverse glee of the dungeons, galleys, rackings, floggings, robberies, poisonings, brawls, wounds, shipwrecks and starvation they had experienced and which they regarded as the proper education of a traveller. "He that is a traveller," wrote Nashe, "must have the back of an ass to bear all, a tongue like the tail of a dog to flatter all, the mouth of a hog to eat all what is set before him, the ear of a merchant to hear all and say nothing ; and if this be not the highest



step of thralldom, there is no liberty or freedom." Webbe, like the Unfortunate Traveller, had an unlimited appetite for "truculent tragedy," and of the two works, Nashe's picaresque novel,<sup>1</sup> and Webbe's self-styled travel book, it is hard to say which is the more brazenly fanciful.

*Edward Webbe : His Travailes, 1590.*

Before being captured by the Turks, Webbe had already been kidnapped by the Crim Tatars at the burning of Moscow<sup>2</sup>—for he never missed a sensational disaster—taken in slavery to the Crimea, and, after being ransomed by his English friends, had not escaped shipwreck and the loss of all his possessions on the voyage home. A year later he was sailing the Mediterranean as master-gunner on a vessel trading between Alexandria and Leghorn, which was attacked, as he claims in his usual big way, by fifty Turkish galleys, and overpowered after a fight lasting forty-eight hours.

"Thus did the Turks take the ship and goods, and in the same found ten of us living whom they took prisoners and presently stripped us naked, and gave us 100 blows apeece for presuming to fight against them.

Then were we sent to Constantinople, and then committed to the gallies, where we continued the space of six years ; the manner of our usage, there, was thus.

First we were shaven head and face, and then a shirt of cotton and breeches of the same put upon us, and our legs and feet left naked, and by one of the feet is each slave chained with a great chain to the galley, and our hands fastened with a pair of manacles. The food which I and others did eat, was very black, far worse than horse-bread, and our drink was stinking water (unless it be when we come to the places where we took in fresh water), at which time we supposed our diet to be very dainty.

Thus as I said before, I remained six years in this miserable state, wonderfully beaten and misused every day : there have I seen some of my fellows when they have been so weak as they could not row by reason of sickness and faintness, where the Turks would lay upon them as upon horses and beat them in such sort, as oft times they died, and then threw them into the sea."

<sup>1</sup> *The Unfortunate Traveller, or the Life of Jack Wilton*, by Thomas Nashe (1567-1601). Published 1594.

<sup>2</sup> The Crim Tatars burnt Moscow in 1571, and a number of Englishmen who were living there in the service of the Muscovy Company lost their lives or were taken into slavery. Some of Webbe's apparently fantastic autobiography can be verified. It is known from a letter written by the explorer, Anthony Jenkinson, that he went to Russia as a boy of twelve years old in Jenkinson's service, and Jenkinson confirms some of the cruelties which Webbe describes as practised by Ivan the Terrible. (See Asia.)

To escape all this Webbe declared that he was a master-gunner, with the result that he was released from the galleys, and sent with the Turkish army on a campaign against Persia. It would be expecting too much of him not to have also visited the land of Prester John, the priest-king of the mythical Christian kingdom in central Asia, at whose court he saw swans with plumage "as blue as any blue cloth," and "three score and seventeen unicorns and elephants all alive at one time, and they were so tame that I played with them as one would play with young lambs." He returned to Constantinople just in time for a famine, during which he was imprisoned with two thousand Christians "pinned up in stone walls locked fast in iron chains, grievously pinched, with extreme penury, and such as wished death rather than in such misery to live": so that he came to grieve at his "hard hap" that the wars had not "ended" him. But on the occasion of the circumcision of the Sultan's son he was at large again, and lively enough to make a particularly ingenious firework for the celebrations:

"Whilst I was remaining prisoner in Turkey, and kept in such slavish manner as is rehearsed the Great Turk had his son circumcised, at which time there was great triumphs and free liberty proclaimed for a hundred days space, that any nobleman, gentleman, traveller, Christian or other, might freely (without being molested) come and see the triumphs there used, which were wonderful: I myself was there constrained to make a cunning piece of firework framed in form like the Ark of Noah, being twenty-four yards high, and eight yards broad, wherein was placed forty men drawn on six wheels, yet no man seen, but seemed to go alone, as though it were only drawn by two fiery dragons, in which shew or Ark there was thirteen thousand several pieces of firework."

At last, through the efforts of the English ambassador, he obtained his freedom; but it was nearly two years before he reached home, for on his return journey he was tried for heresy at Padua, involved in trouble in Rome first with the Pope and then with the English College, and in Naples denounced as a spy, gruesomely tortured, and imprisoned for seven months in a dark dungeon.

Meanwhile the Levant Merchants had consolidated their position and laid the foundations of a prosperous business. On the accession of the next Sultan, Mohammed III, they took the opportunity of presenting a particularly valuable gift. This new ruler had outdone his predecessor by assassinating nineteen of his brothers,—the worst, and last example of this method of securing the throne. To prevent a recurrence of such mass family murders the royal princes were thenceforward kept in *kawehs*—cages—actually little pavilions in the seraglio gardens, where they were imprisoned until they either succeeded to the throne or died.

This custom, while bringing some degree of security into royal family life, hardly improved the mental balance of the future Sultans, and was no doubt responsible for much of the fanatical folly which helped to wreck the Turkish empire.

The present selected by the Levant Merchants—with the approval of Queen Elizabeth—for Mohammed III, was much more rare and elegant than anything that had been brought by the first ambassador. Indeed it was an object which would have delighted such connoisseurs as Evelyn or Lassels, one of those ingenious contrivances which were the pride of seventeenth-century Europe: a mechanical organ which played four part songs without a musician, decorated with figures that of their own accord moved and blew trumpets, and birds that flapped their wings and sang. The builder and designer was Master Thomas Dallam, a young man who was later to become England's leading organ builder, and would have been more famous now, had not the finest of his works, his organs in King's College, Cambridge, and in Worcester Cathedral, been destroyed by the Cromwellians in the Civil War.

*Master Thomas Dallam*<sup>1</sup> ; *Diary*. 1599-1600.

In 1599 Dallam sailed to Constantinople in charge of his organ. Belonging to a stay-at-home profession, this journey must have been an unexpected adventure, made the more exciting by his inexperience, and by the knowledge that it was never likely to be repeated. Every moment of his travels, from the day when he "departed from London with a pair of oars," rowing himself to the ship at Gravesend, on which he embarked with his "chest" and bedding, and "a pair of virginals," which he was allowed to take with him so that he could practise music during the voyage, until his return to Dover, more than a year later: "our trumpets sounding all the way before us into the town, where we made ourselves as merry as we could, being very glad that we were once again upon English ground," is written with an intensity unusual even at this period, when English travellers saw so much for the first time, and the world was infinitely surprising to them.

During his journey to and from Constantinople Dallam visited only places already well known to merchants trading in the Mediterranean: Algiers, Zante, Cyprus, Scanderoon, Rhodes, Chios, Greece, yet he explored them as eagerly as if they held the riches of the orient or the

<sup>1</sup> *Thomas Dallam*, came from the village of Dallam, in Lancashire. He went to London as a young man and was apprenticed to the Blacksmith's Company, which then supervised the Company of the Organ-Builders. After his return from Constantinople he built many important organs, and he and his sons, Robert and Ralph Dallam, became the leading English organ-builders of their time.

wealth of Eldorado. What explorer can have eyed an undiscovered land more eagerly than Dallam, as he waited, cooped in his ship, off the shore of Zante ?

"Whilst we lay thus for six days upon the sea before the town, I took notice of a little mountain, the which, as I thought, did lie close to the sea, and seemed to be a very pleasant place to take a view of the whole island and the sea before it. It showed to be a very green and plain ground on the top of it, and a white thing like a rock in the middle thereof. I took such pleasure in beholding this hill that I made a kind of vow or promise to myself that as soon as I set foot on shore I would neither eat nor drink until I had been on the top thereof, and in the meantime did labour with two of my companions, and persuaded them to bear me company."

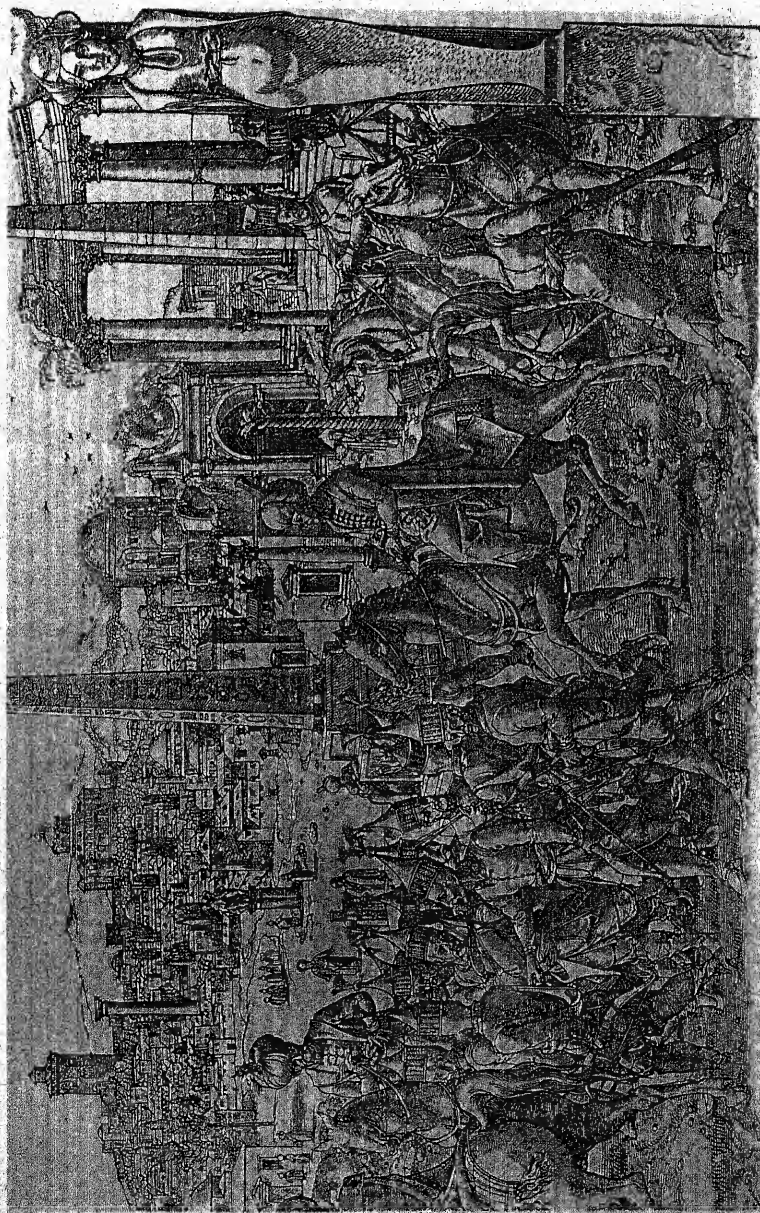
There was nothing to be found on this mountain-top but some friendly peasants who offered him "a fair silver cup" full of "a reddish wine," which he accepted, calling to his more timid companion : "Here, Ned, a carouse to all our friends in England !" yet the excursion seems a memorable adventure. His accounts of other landings, at Algiers, Scanderoon, Rhodes, Relezea, which resulted in little but petty brawls with the local inhabitants, make a similar impression. Every new scene or unfamiliar object acquired a magnified strangeness : buffaloes which "made a great noise with their snuffling" in a quagmire ; "brave horsemen, with their lances" of the Turkish army going to the wars, who travelled in the cool of the night, and encamped, every day a new company, on the shore near Scanderoon ; Grecian women, apparelled in pearls and jewels, red satin, and watchet damask ; the supposed ruins of Troy, where, in the manner of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and many subsequent diletanti, he hacked off an imposing souvenir—"from thence I brought a piece of white marble pillar, the which I broke with my own hands, having a good hammer" ; and that Arabic contrivance which never failed to impress European travellers of his period, the chicken incubator.<sup>1</sup> Dallam's diary is as characteristic of the seventeenth century as was his wonderful organ, inspired, like other travel books of the age, by a passion for new information, a boundless curiosity concerning people and their customs, plants, animals, mechanical inventions, and, of course, natural phenomena.

On the voyage out he noted an extraordinary effect of lighting :

"The seventh of April being Easter eve, we saw a very strange lightning in the sky, or in the air. It was very wonderful and strange, for we might see the air open and a fire like a very hot iron taken out

<sup>1</sup> An account of the *Method of hatching chickens at Cairo*, as observed by Mr. John Greaves, was first published in England by Sir George Ent, President of the College of Physicians, in 1678, in No. 137 of the Philosophical Transactions.

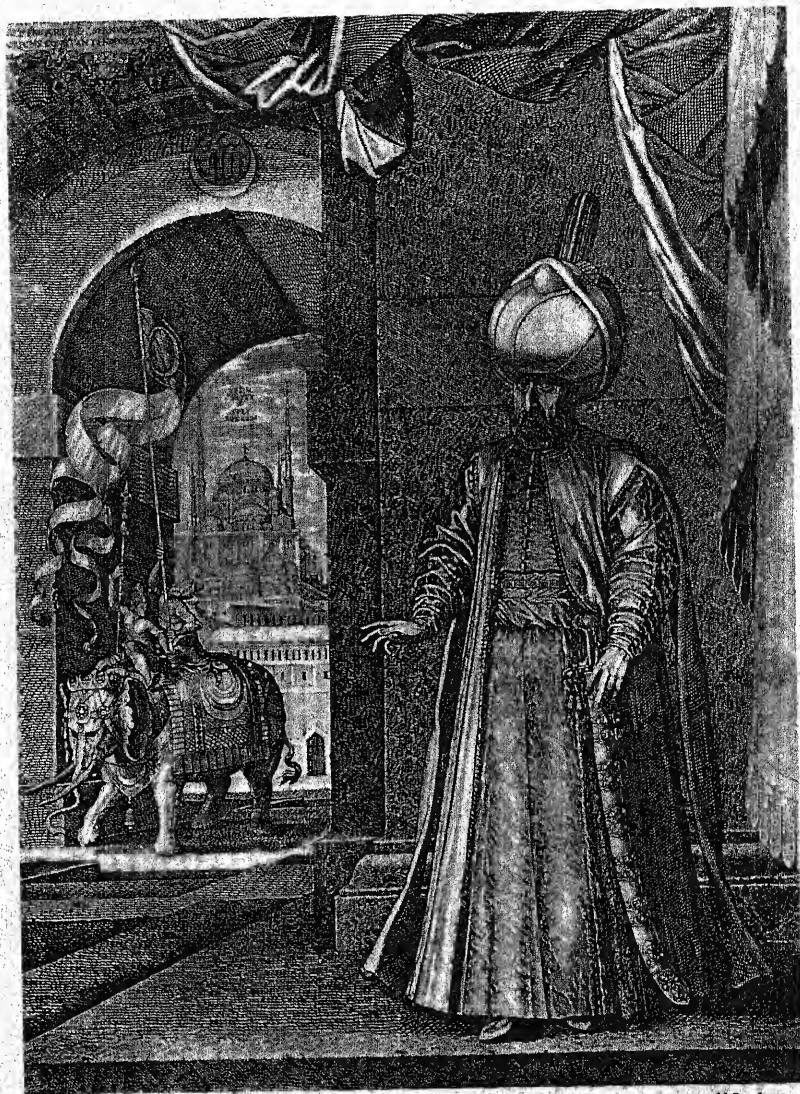




Solennitè the Magnificent passing in procession through the Roman circus in Constantinople.  
*From a sixteenth century woodcut after a drawing by Coeck Van Aelst. By courtesy of the Victoria  
and Albert Museum.*



PLATE X



Soliman the Magnificent. From an engraving made from life by  
Melchior Larichs.  
*By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

of a smith's forge, sometimes in the likeness of a running worm, another time like a horseshoe, and again like a leg and a foot. Also the thunder claps were also exceeding great."

If the voyage through the Mediterranean, which actually had little unusual about it, appeared to Dallam clothed in the strange and vivid atmosphere of a dream, when he penetrated into the heart of the mysterious Turkish dominions the strangeness intensified, his adventures became even more startling and fantastic.

The ship being becalmed in the Hellespont, the English ambassador at Constantinople, Mr. Henry Lello, sent two gentlemen, Mr. Glover and Mr. Baylye, protected by a janissary, to fetch Dallam and some of his companions in a *chirmagee*, a boat rowed by slaves. By this primitive means they travelled up the Sea of Marmora, stopping for food and sleep at various places on the coast. Here their experiences were often alarming, and sometimes grotesque. At Ganos, distrusting the people of the town, they camped in an empty house by the sea-shore :

"Our Captain, Mr. Glover, when we had well viewed the town and seen that the condition of the people was not to our liking, he made choice of a house for us to lodge in, that was next unto the sea. The town stood upon a hill, and this house upon the very brink or end of the hill, being the height of St. Paul's church above the sea ; and we were to go up a ladder unto a gallery that was made at the end of the house, looking towards the sea, and there was a little door to go into the room where we should lodge upon the bare boards.

"For, in all this time that we travelled, we never put off our clothes, neither did we find any bed to rest in. In this room there was not so much as a stool or form to sit upon, nor anything in the house but one shelf, whereon stood two pitchers and two earthen platters ; not one window to give light, but one littlehole through a stone wall.

"We being at this town before noon, to pass away the time after we had made a short dinner, we walked down to the wood side, which is close to the sea ; a wilderness or desert wood, which is put to no use, as we did think, by the sight of it. There we saw diverse sorts of vermin, which we have not the like in England.

"Growing towards night, and remembering what hard lodging we should have in our new inn, finding a thick soft weed, that grewed by the wood side, every one of us that was there gathered a bundle of it to lay under our heads, when we should sleep.

"Night being come, and our supper ended, every man chalked out his resting place upon the bare boards ; our janissary placed himself upon a board that lay loose upon the joists. Every man had his sword ready drawn lying by his side, two of our company had muskets. When we had lain about half an hour, we that had our weeden pillows were suddenly

wonderfully tormented with a vermin that was in our pillows, the which did bite far worse than fleas, so that we were glad to throw away our pillows, and sweep the house clean, but we could not cleanse ourselves so soon. Thus as we lay waking in a dark uncomfortable house, Mr. Glover told us what strange vermin and beasts he had seen in that country, for he had lived long there. He spoke very much of adders, snakes, and serpentes, the difference and the bigness of some which he had seen.

"Passing away the time with such like talk, the most part of us fell asleep, and some that could not sleep lay still and said nothing for disquieting of the rest, . . . Mr. Baylye had occasion to go to the door to make water, the door was very little, and opened very straightly into the gallery, the wind blowed marvellous strongly, and made a great noise, for the house lay open to the sea and weather. Mr. Baylye, when he lay down to sleep, had untied his garters a little, so that when he came into the gallery, the wind blew his garter, that was loose and trailed after him, round about the other leg; it was a great silk garter, and by the force of the wind it fettered his legs both fast together. Our talk a little before, of adders, snakes, and serpentes, was yet in his remembrance, and the place was near where much vermin was. He thought they had swarmed about him, but about his legs he thought he was sure of a serpente, so that suddenly he cried out with all the voice he had: 'A serpente! a serpente! a serpente!' and was so frightened that he could not find the door to get in, but made a great bustling and noise in the gallery. On the other side, we that were in the house, did think that he had said: 'Assaulted! Assaulted!' for before night we doubted that some treachery would happen to us in that town, so that we thought the house had been beset with people to cut our throats. There was fifteen of us in the house, and it was but a little house; every man took his sword in hand, one ready to spoil another, not anyone knowing the cause. One that could not find his sword, got to the chimney, and offering to climb up, down fell part of the chimney upon his head, and hurt him a little; another, that was suddenly awaked, struck about him with his sword, and beat down the shelf and broke the pitchers and platters which stood thereon; the room being very dark, for it was about midnight. Others did think that they were pulling down the house over our heads. Our janissary, who should have been our guard, and have protected us from all dangers, he likewise doubting the people of the town, and hearing such a noise suddenly, he took up the loose board whereon he lay, and slipped down into the vault. As we were thus all amazed, at the last Mr. Baylye found the way in at the door. When Mr. Glover saw him come in, he said unto him: 'How now, man, what is the matter, who do you see?' Mr. Baylye was even breathless with fear, crying out, and with struggling to get in at the door, so that he could not answer him at the first; at last he said: 'A serpente!

a serpente ! ' had troubled him. When Mr. Glover heard him say so, then fear was gone, and he went to the door, and there found Mr. Baylye's garter ready to be carried away with the wind. After we a little wondered at our great amazement for so small a cause, Mr. Glover called every man by his name, to see if any man were slain or wounded ; for there was sixteen of us in all, our weapons all drawn, and the room was but little. Every man being called, we were all alive, and but small hurts done. At last we found our janissary wanting ; who might well be ashamed to make known where he was ; but Mr. Glover calling him very earnestly, he answered in the vault. He could not get out any way, but Mr. Gonzale took up the board that lay where he went down, and lying along the floor, he could but hardly reach him, to take him by the hand ; without much ado they pulled him up. When he leaped into the vault, being very sore frightened, he cast off his upper garment, and left it behind him in the vault, but no man could persuade him to go down again and fetch it, for the place was loathsome, and it would seem that he was there frightened with something, in that kind Mr. Baylye was ; so his garment remained there till the morning, that he who owned the house did fetch it."

At last they reached the capital, and the following day they saw their ship, which had followed them, come to anchor near the seraglio. A week later, when the ship had been repainted, formal salutation was made to the Sultan ; an ensign flew from every mast, a silk pennant from every yards arm, and the men, perched on the mast-tops, discharged eight-score musket shot interspersed with volleys of small shot—a performance carried out "with very good decorum and true time." But when the organ came to be unpacked from the hold, it was found to be badly damaged, all the "glueing work" being "clean decayed" by the heat and "the working of the sea." After a natural outburst of indignation, Dallam settled down to repair it, in the company, as was fitting to this exotic world, of an exiled monarch.

"When our Ambassador . . . and other gentlemen, see in what case it was in, they were all amazed, and said that it was not worth mending. My answer unto our Ambassador . . . at this time I will omit ; but when Mr. Aldridge heard what I said, he told me that if I did make it perfect he would give me, of his own purse, £15, so about my work I went.

The twenty-third, the King of Fez<sup>1</sup> came to see my work, and he sat by me half a day."

The repairs being completed, Dallam was instructed to set up the

<sup>1</sup> The old line of the Kings of Fez had been driven out by the Emperor of Morocco in 1548 and the family had taken refuge in Constantinople.



organ in the seraglio, taking every precaution to ensure that it was in perfect working order. Much depended on pleasing that capricious tyrant, Mohammed III. Mr. Lello had only recently been appointed ambassador, and was waiting to present his credentials after the Sultan had been conciliated by Queen Elizabeth's gift. The former ambassador, Sir Edward Barton, who had managed to keep on very friendly terms with the Sultan, had unfortunately recently died as a result of accompanying him on a strenuous military campaign against Hungary.

Lello took care to coach Dallam for his part. The Sultan, he told him, was "no ordinary prince or King," but a "mighty monarch of the world"; he was also "an infidel, and the grand enemy to all Christians." Dallam should expect no recompense for his work, for the Sultan had never been known to reward a Christian; nor should he even hope, after all his long and dangerous journey, to be allowed to set eyes upon the monarch. He himself, although an ambassador, when he came to present his credentials, would be made to dismount from his horse, and, after being searched, would be led to the Sultan with two men holding his arms to his sides. He would have to kiss the sleeve of the Sultan kneeling on one knee, and then he would be led away, walking backwards, for to turn his back on the Sultan would mean instant death. His good reception depended upon the Sultan's approval of the present. Should the organ not please him at sight, or should it fail to perform everything that had been promised, the Sultan was liable to have it pulled to pieces on the spot and trample it under his feet.

But the presentation of the organ went off better than anyone had dared to hope; so well indeed, that Dallam was summoned to the presence of the Grand Signior, and was able to crown his adventures by seeing with his own eyes the magnificent mysteries of the Turkish court. In all the centuries that the Sultans ruled Turkey, few Englishmen entered the seraglio, and none has described it more vividly than this naïve, but highly perceptive observer, who saw it in a period of pomp and glory, when the prestige of Turkey was still justified by her imperial power.

"The next morning. . . . I went to the Surralia<sup>1</sup>, and with me my mate Harvie, who was the engineer, Mr. Rowland Buckett the painter and Myghell Watson the joiner.

"About an hour or two after my lord was ready, and set forward towards the Surralia, he did ride like unto a king, only that he wanted a crown. There rode with him twenty-two gentlemen and merchants, all in cloth of gold; . . . there went on foot twenty-eight more in blue gowns made after the Turkey fashion, and every man a silk grogren,<sup>2</sup> after the Italian fashion. My livery was a fair cloak of a French green, etc.,

<sup>1</sup> *surralia*: seraglio.

<sup>2</sup> *grogren*: from the French *grosgrain*.

"Now when I had set all my work in good order, the jemyglanes<sup>1</sup> which kept that house espied the Grand Sinyor coming upon the water in his golden Chieke,<sup>2</sup> or boat, for he came that morning six miles by water ; where I stood I saw when he set foot on the shore.

"Then the jemyglanes told me that I must avoid the house, for the Grand Sinyor would be there presently. It was almost half a mile betwixt the water and that house ; but the Grand Sinyor, having a desire to see his present, came thither with marvellous great speed. I and my company that was with me, being put forth, and the door locked after us, I heard another door open, and upon a sudden a wonderful noise of people ; for a little space it should seem that at the Grand Sinyor's coming into the house the door which I heard open did set at liberty four hundred persons which were locked up all the time of the Grand Sinyor's absence, and just at his coming in they were set at liberty, and at the first sight of the present, with great admiration did make a wondering noise.

"The Grand Sinyor, being seated in his chair of estate, commanded silence. All being quiet, and no noise at all, the present began to salute the Grand Sinyor ; for when I left it I did allow a quarter of an hour for his coming thither. First the clock struck twenty-two ; then the chime of sixteen bells went off, and played a song of four parts. That being done, two personages which stood upon two corners of the second story, holding two silver trumpets in their hands, did lift them to their heads, and sounded a tantarra.<sup>3</sup> Then the music went off, and the organ played a song of five parts twice over. In the top of the organ, being sixteen foot high, did stand a holly bush full of blackbirds and thrushes, which at the end of the music did sing and shake their wings. Divers other motions there was which the Grand Sinyor wondered at. Then the Grand Sinyor asked the Coppagaw<sup>4</sup> if it would ever do the like again. He answered that it would do the like again at the next hour. Quoth he : ' I will see that.' In the mean time, the Coppagaw, being a wise man, and doubted whether I had so appointed it or no, for he knew that it would go of itself but four times in twenty-four hours, so he came unto me, for I did stand under the house side, where I might hear the organ go, and asked me if it would go again at the end of the next hour ; but I told him that it would not, for I did think the Grand Sinyor would not have stayed so long by it ; but if it would please him, that when the clock had struck he would touch a little pin with his finger, which before I had shewed him, it would go at any time. Then he said that he

<sup>1</sup> jemyglanes : adjemoglans ;—the sons of strangers (adjemi), prisoners of war or Christian captives, who performed servile offices in the seraglio to which no Turk would demean himself.

<sup>2</sup> Chieke : caique.

<sup>3</sup> tantarra : fanfare.

<sup>4</sup> Coppagaw : gate-keeper.

would be as good as his word to the Grand Sinyor. When the clock began to strike again, the Coppagaw went and stood by it ; and when the clock had struck twenty-three, he touched that pin, and it did the like as it did before. Then the Grand Sinyor said it was good. He sat very near unto it, right before the keys, where a man should play on it by hand. He asked why those keys did move when the organ went and nothing did touch them. He told him that by those things it might be played on at any time. Then the Grand Sinyor asked him if he did know any man that could play on it. He said no, but he that came with it could, and he is here without the door. 'Fetch him hither,' quoth the Grand Sinyor, 'and let me see how he doth it.' Then the Coppagaw opened that door which I went out at, for I stood near unto it. He came and took me by the hand, smiling upon me ; but I bid my dragoman ask him what I should do, or whether I should go. He answered that it was the Grand Sinyor's pleasure that I should let him see me play on the organ. So I went with him. When I came within the door, that which I did see was very wonderful unto me. I came directly upon the Grand Sinyor's right hand, some sixteen of my paces from him, but he would not turn his head to look upon me. He sat in great state, yet the sight of him was nothing in comparison of the train that stood behind him, the sight whereof did make me almost to think that I was in another world. The Grand Sinyor sat still, beholding the present which was before him, and I stood dazzling my eyes with looking upon his people that stood behind him, the which was four hundred persons in number. Two hundred of them were his principal pages, the youngest of them sixteen years of age, some twenty, and some thirty. They were apparelled in rich cloth of gold made in gowns to the middle-leg ; upon their heads little caps of cloth of gold, and some cloth of tissue<sup>1</sup> ; great pieces of silk about their waists instead of girdles ; upon their legs Cordovan buskins,<sup>2</sup> red. Their heads were all shaven, saving that behind their ears did hang a lock of hair like a squirrel's tail ; their beards shaven, all saving their upper lips. Those two hundred men were all very proper men, and Christians born.

"The third hundred were dumb men, that could neither hear nor speak, and they were likewise in gowns of rich cloth of gold and Cordovan buskins ; but their caps were of violet velvet, the crown of them made like a leather bottle, the brims divided into five peaked corners. Some of them had hawks in their fists.

"The fourth hundred were all dwarfs, big-bodied men, but very low of stature. Every dwarf did wear a scimitar by his side, and they were also apparelled in gowns of cloth of gold.

"I did most of all wonder at those dumb men, for they let me under-

<sup>1</sup> cloth of tissue : interwoven or variegated material.

<sup>2</sup> Cordovan buskins : boots made of Spanish leather.

stand by their perfect signs all things that they had seen the present do by its motions.<sup>1</sup>

"When I had stood almost one quarter of an hour beholding this wonderful sight, I heard the Grand Sinyor speak unto the Coppagaw, who stood near unto him. Then the Coppagaw came unto me, and took my cloak from about me, and lay it down upon the carpets, and bid me go and play on the organ ; but I refused to do so, because the Grand Sinyor sat so near the place where I should play that I could not come at it, but I must needs turn my back towards him and touch his knee with my breeches, which no man, in pain of death, might do, saving only the Coppagaw. So he smiled, and let me stand a little. Then the Grand Sinyor spoke again, and the Coppagaw, with a merry countenance, bid me go with a good courage, and thrust me on. When I came very near the Grand Sinyor, I bowed my head as low as my knee, not moving my cap, and turned my back right towards him, and touched his knee with my breeches.

"He sat in a very rich chair of estate, upon his thumb a ring with a diamond in it half an inch square, a fair scimitar by his side, a bow, and a quiver of arrows.

"He sat so right behind me that he could not see what I did ; therefore he stood up, and his Coppagaw removed his chair to one side where he might see my hands ; but, in his rising from his chair, he gave me a thrust forwards, which he could not otherwise do, he sat so near me ; but I thought he had been drawing his sword to cut off my head.

"I stood there playing such things as I could until the clock struck, and then I bowed my head as low as I could, and went from him with my back towards him. As I was taking off my cloak, the Coppagaw came unto me and bid me stand still and let my cloak lie ; when I had stood a little while, the Coppagaw bid me go and cover the keys of the organ ; then I went close to the Grand Sinyor again, and bowed myself, and then I went backwards to my cloak. When the company saw me do so they seemed to be glad, and laughed. Then I saw the Grand Sinyor put his hand behind him full of gold, which the Coppagaw received, and brought unto me forty and five pieces of gold called chickers,<sup>2</sup> and then I was put out again where I came in, being not a little joyful of my good success.

"Being gotten out of the surralia, I made all the speed I could to that gate where the ambassador went in, for he and all his company

<sup>1</sup> In this despotic court, where decorum and secrecy were so desirable, the language of signs became fashionable, and was often used by courtiers other than the deaf-mutes.

<sup>2</sup> chickers : sequins, an Italian coin, originally Venetian, worth about nine shillings.



stood all these two hours expecting the Grand Sinyor's coming to another place where he should deliver his embassy and letters."

Dallam's success was sensational ; the modest organ builder suddenly found himself a person of consequence, daily invited to the palace, flattered and petted by ambitious Turkish courtiers, who begged him to stay in Constantinople, and allowed him the privilege of the most scandalous liberties :

"The 12th, being Friday, I was sent for to the court, and also the Sunday and Monday following, to no other end but to show me the Grand Sinyor's privy chambers, his gold and silver, his chairs of estate ; and he that showed me them would have me to sit down in one of them, and then to draw that sword out of the sheath with which the Grand Sinyor doth crown his king.

"When he had showed me many other things which I wondered at, then crossing through a little square court paved with marble, he pointed me to go to a grate in a wall, but made me a sign that he might not go thither himself. When I came to the grate the wall was very thick, and grated on both sides with iron very strongly ; but through that grate, I did see thirty of the Grand Sinyor's concubines that were playing with a ball in another court. At the first sight of them I thought they had been young men, but when I saw the hair on their heads hang down their backs, plaited together with a tassel of small pearl hanging in the lower end of it, and other plain tokens, I did know them to be women and very pretty ones indeed. . . . I stood so long looking upon them that he which showed me all this kindness began to be very angry with me. He made a wry mouth, and stamped with his foot to make me give over looking ; the which I was very loathe to do, for that sight did please me wondrous well."

In the end, the Grand Signior's interest became embarrassing. Dallam had already embarked, and the ship was ready to sail for England, when orders came from the Sultan that he was to remain in Constantinople. But Dallam had by this time had enough of court favours, and only wanted to get back to his solid English independence : he lost his temper with Mr. Lello, accused him of betraying him into the hands of the Turks, with whom he would "live a slavish life and never company again Christians," and flatly refused to stay. The ambassador, who seems to have been a model diplomat, managed to calm him by guaranteeing that he could leave as soon as he had moved the organ, in accordance with the Sultan's wishes, to another place, and promising him any money he asked for his return journey.

That Dallam obstinately turned down all subsequent offers to stay is a matter of regret, when one thinks of the diary that might have resulted

had this entertaining writer settled in Constantinople as court favourite and organist to the Sultan. But the account of his journey home, by sea and overland across Greece, in the company of a party of Englishmen, is diverting enough, with its many exciting incidents, and vivid descriptions of every unfamiliar object they encountered. It is only unfortunate that he was not allowed to look at a mermaid who approached their ship in the Gulf of Lyons, mermaids being apparently regarded as dangerous sirens :

" . . . being at dinner we heard the cry of a mermaid, like as if one had hailed our ship ; but our boatswain forbade any man to answer or look out."

During the seventeenth century increasing numbers of Englishmen visited Constantinople, not only on business, but as sightseers. The most glowing descriptions of the city belong to this period. Everyone admired the view of its noble buildings glittering on wooded hills surrounded on two sides by the sea ; its contemporary greatness was still unquestioned, its antique grandeur still a fashionable cult, while the hidden treasures of the seraglio were a tempting subject for the imagination of a period which delighted in what was " rare " and " curious." Even Thomas Gainsford, who wrote a book to prove that everything foreign was inferior to everything English, had to admit that Constantinople endangered his argument.

*Thomas Gainsford*<sup>1</sup> : *The Glory of England, or a True Description of many excellent prerogatives and remarkable blessings, whereby She Triumpheth over all the Nations of the World : With a justifiable comparison between the eminent Kingdomes of the Earth and Herselfe, plainly manifesting the defects of them all in regard to her sufficiencie and fulnesse of happinesse.* (Pub. 1618.)

" What I have said of Paris by way of comparison, concerning the government and orderly managing the affairs of a city, I may well conclude against Constantinople : but because this Imperial place looketh with a more majestical countenance than other cities and lifteth up (as it were) a daring head against all contradiction of her superiority : I must need pencil out her praises at some length, and tell you truly wherein her worthiness consisteth, and may yet deceive opinion without true judgment. . . . The seraglio is the palace of the Grand Seigneur, yet is a name appropriate to diverse sequestered places, wherein his women are detained, . . . it is a receptacle for divers thousands, enclosing as much ground as St. James park . . . The banqueting-houses, wherein

<sup>1</sup> *Thomas Gainsford* (d. 1624 ?), author of several books including *The Historie of Trebizond in foure books*, published 1616, a collection of romantic stories. Little is known of his life save that he served in the wars in Ireland.

his concubines and boys are aparted from the court hurliburly, expose divers manner of structures and seem indeed several palaces, among whom there is one called a caska<sup>1</sup> without the wall of the seraglio, close to the sea-side,—where he accustometh to take his gally,—of the delicatest and richest presence that ever I beheld: for it is a quadrant of seven arches on a side cloister-wise, like the Rialto walk in Venice: in the midst riseth a core of three of four rooms with chimneys, whose mantle trees are of silver, the windows curiously glazed and besides protected with an iron grate all gilt over most curiously: the whole frame so set with opals, rubies, emeralds, burnished with gold, painted with flowers, and graced with inlaid work of pophyry, marble, jet, jasper, and delicate stones, that I am persuaded there is not such a bird-cage in the world. Under the walls are stables for sea-horses called hippopotami, which is a monstrous beast taken in Nilus, elephants, tigers, and dolphins: sometimes they have crocodiles and rhinoceros: within are roebucks, white partridges, and turtles, the bird of Arabia, and many beasts and fowls of Africa and India.

"The walks are shaded with cypress, cedar, turpentine, and trees we only know by their names, amongst which, such as afford sustenance, are called figs, almonds, olives, pomegranates, lemons, oranges, and such like: but it should seem that are here as it were enforced and kept in order with extraordinary diligence: for the sun kisseth them not with that fervency, as may make them large, or ripen their proper kinds."

*George Sandys*<sup>2</sup>: *Relation of a Journey Begun An. Dom. 1610.*

George Sandys, a cultured Englishman of the seventeenth century who, like Evelyn and Lassels, went abroad to see the splendour of the ancient world and the refinement of the modern, after travelling through France and Italy in 1610, sailed from Venice to Constantinople. His tour—a very enterprising one for the period—was to take him from Turkey to Egypt, to Mount Sinai, to the Holy Land, and homewards by way of

<sup>1</sup> caska: kiosk, pavilion.

<sup>2</sup> *George Sandys* (1578-1644), seventh and youngest son of Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of York. His *Relation of a Journey* was published in 1615. In 1621 he went to Virginia as colonial treasurer of the Virginia Company. His translation of the first five books of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* was published soon after he left. He translated the remaining ten books during the voyage and in Virginia; the completed translation was published in 1626. When Virginia became a crown colony in 1624 he was created a member of the council, and was twice reappointed. He left in 1631; on his return to England he became a gentleman of the Privy Chamber of Charles I. In 1636 he published his *Paraphrase upon the Psalms and upon the Hymnes dispersed throughout the Old and New Testaments*; in 1640 *Christ's Passion*, translated from the Latin of Grotius; in 1641 *A Paraphrase of the Song of Solomon*. His elder brother Sir Edwin Sandys was a statesman who held important posts in the Virginia Company.

Cyprus, Sicily, southern Italy and Rome, where he stopped to study antiquities under the scholar Nicholas Fitzherbert.<sup>1</sup>

It is unfortunate that Sandys, a fascinating and typical figure of the seventeenth century—writer, scholar, traveller, colonist and politician—should have been remembered by the least interesting thing about him: his poetry. Few would now share Pope's enthusiasm for his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, or derive much pleasure from the works that were so popular in his life-time—his poetical paraphrases of the scriptures. It is not as a poet, but as a character that Sandys is interesting. Those familiar with the minor poet of today, who shrinks from public life and scorns "progress," cannot fail to admire this man who threw himself so valiantly into the current of his age, who spent ten years in the barbarous new colony of Virginia wrangling with planters and council, became on his return a gentleman of the Privy Chamber of Charles I, and managed simultaneously to produce long poetical works, translating two volumes of Ovid during the Atlantic voyage, in his own words: "amongst the roaring of the seas."

These volumes, it is true, reveal little of his imagination; his poetical career, courageously pursued throughout the struggles of politics and pioneering, has merely obscured the work on which his fame should rest, that forgotten masterpiece, *A Relation of a Journey*. Whoever opens this book must be astonished to find that the writer in whose poetry lilies are always white, roses red, the yoke galling, and tears "salt rivers of the eyes," should have created prose embodying everything that he admired in the literature of ancient Greece: "lofty sound, significant expressions, and genuine suavity."

"Significant expressions" season nearly every description in this highly-flavoured book: The Gulf of Venice is "a sea tempestuous and unfaithful"; Morea is "shaped like a plantain leaf"; mosaics make an effect of "unexpressible stateliness"; fishermen were "endamnified much by the violent breaking of the seas"; the monks of Patmos are "men ignorant of letters, studious for their bellies, and ignominiously lazy." "Genuine suavity" guides each phrase to a conclusion as happy as the breaking of a gentle wave: "Our sails now swelling with the first breath of May, on the right hand we left Cyprus"; while "lofty sound" splendidly exalts his more emotional passages: "This famous country, the stage of wonders," he writes of the Holy Land; and with a proper seventeenth-century respect for commercial enterprise he writes of Egypt: "Hither the sacred thirst of gain, and fear of poverty, allureth the adventurous merchant from far removed nations."

The book, like many travel books of his period, is, of course, overburdened with facts: the detailed and sometimes legendary history of

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Fitzherbert (1550-1612); a Roman Catholic, he left England to settle in Rome, where he became secretary to Cardinal Allen.



each race and country from its origin to his own time ; meticulous descriptions of each monument in lands full—to use his own words—of “ congested antiquities ” ; innumerable quotations from classical authors in Latin, with the English translation alongside, and, as is inevitable in seventeenth-century travel literature, elaborate speculations on science and natural history. But with Sandys fantasy always colours, and sometimes distorts, learning ; he cannot discuss the construction of the pyramids—those “ barbarous monuments of prodigality and vainglory ”—without conjecturing the cost of the radishes, garlic and onions consumed by the workmen employed ; while the crocodile—ichneumon—interests him on account of a legend even then discredited : “ They write that a little bird called Trochilus, doth feed herself by the picking of his teeth, wherewith delighted, and gaping wide, the ichneumon his mortal enemy espying his advantage, whips into his mouth, and gliding down his throat like an arrow, gnaweth a way through his belly, and destroys him. This though now little spoken of, in times past was delivered for a truth, . . . And perhaps true it is, though not observed by the barbarous.”

A number of beautiful engravings illustrate the text, which were intended to provide further accurate information ; but the engraver was captivated, it seems, by the fantasy of Sandys' writing, and has succeeded in giving an equally enchanted picture of his travels. The mountains of Judea are rolling thunderclouds, ominous with prophecies and miracles, on which ancient buildings, perfect as only artificial ruins can be, stand out with the unearthly clarity of a surrealist painting ; Avernus is an ornamental lake in a nobleman's park ; and against the portrait of a hippopotamus, Sandys conscientiously notes : “ In this Hippotam the cutter chose rather to follow than reform an error,”—and there is a chubby horse, coquettishly flourishing the tail of a fish !

But though he dabbled in science, studying the plants and animals peculiar to each country, debating why negroes were black, why volcanoes erupted, and whether chameleons lived solely on air, it was that other passion of the seventeenth century, the ancient world of Greece and Rome, that most absorbed him. Sandys had the rare gift of historical imagination, which made his chosen period of the past as alive to him as his own day. Charon was “ an ill-favoured slovenly fellow ” ; the “ antique Grecians ” feasted reclining on couches, crowned with chaplets of flowers and garlands of laurel, but “ the women did sit when admitted ” . . . “ for them to lie along, esteemed too provokingly lascivious.”

Pottering among the confusion of ruins near Naples, he re-created in prose the vicious luxury of ancient Rome, much as Sacheverell Sitwell has recreated the baroque splendour of Caserta. The Naples of the seventeenth century, where the gentry, wearing Spanish costume, “ delight much in horses whereupon they prance continually thorow

the streets," is but a tantalising flash in his narrative ; but the temples, amphitheatres and " mansion houses " of the Romans rise from their shroud of briars and myrtles in perfect magnificence. The painted boats are once again upon the lakes, full of " by-sailing harlots," gliding under starlit skies through water strewn with roses ; the fish-ponds are full of tame and petted lampreys, fed delicately on the flesh of living slaves. The circuses, following the fashion of the " Circus Maximus," are carpeted with a powder of white stone, of a green mineral sprinkled with vermilion, with filings of gold and silver—(Heliogabalus regretted that he could not procure amber)—they are planted again with artificial forests, where men are forced to hunt ostriches, stags and boars with their naked hands ; the theatres with three-stories stages are once more peopled with three thousand statues and four-score thousand spectators. In these seaside resorts, emperors, consuls and generals abandon themselves to " the enticing sorcery of pleasures," women " incredibly impudent," oysters with which to " indulge " their " gluttony " ; one winter here " enfeebled " Hannibal more than all the rigours of the Alps, and " What a sight it is to see drunkards reeling along the shore, the banquetings of such as are rowed on the water, the lakes reckoning their continual canzonets ! "

In the capital of the Turkish empire, the seat of the Grand Signior, Sandys saw a revival of that tyrannical magnificence. The palace of Constantine had become a " stable for wild beasts " ; but in the " proud palace of the tyrant "—the Sultan's seraglio—was a sumptuous summer house, " delicate gardens, artificial fountains, all variety of fruit-trees, and what not rare ? Luxury being the steward, and the treasure inexhaustible ! " The stables housed five hundred horses, but most valuable of all was the zebra, an animal so unnatural as to simulate art : " a mule so admirably streaked, and dappled with white and black, and in such due proportion as if a painter had done it, not to imitate nature, but to please the eye, and express his curiosity." The taste of the seventeenth century, which admired trees shaped like turrets, fountains shaped like animals and men, which preferred a mechanical bird to a wild one, and a *trompe d'œil* to a view, obviously had no use for realism in art, and liked nature to be as artificial as possible.

Sandys, like Evelyn and other cultured men of his period, saw the world, past and present, as a gallery of pictures. At this period the appreciation of the life was visual, not sentimental ; it was not until the latter half of the eighteenth century that sympathy became a habit, and emotional reactions to people, cities, and landscapes—now taken for granted—were generally expressed. It was the pictorial beauty of Constantinople that delighted all seventeenth-century travellers, and inspired one of Sandys' loftiest-sounding descriptions :

" . . . the Emperor Constantine . . . built his city where as now it standeth. . . . Finished it was on the eleventh of May, in the year 331, and consecrated to the blessed Virgin. Rome he bereft of her ornaments to adorn it, fetching from thence in one year more antiquities than twenty Emperors had brought thither in an hundred. . . .

" This city, by destiny appointed, and by nature seated for sovereignty, was first the seat of the Roman Emperors, then of the Greek, as now it is of the Turkish. . . . It stands on a cape of land near the entrance of the Bosphorus. In form triangular : on the east side washed with the same, on the north side with the haven, adjoining on the west to the continent. Walled with brick and stone, intermixed orderly : having four and twenty gates and posterns ; whereof five do regard the land, and nineteen the water : being about thirteen miles in circumference. Than this there is hardly in nature a more delicate object, if beheld from the sea or adjoining mountains : the lofty and beautiful cypress trees so intermixed with the buildings, that it seemeth to present a city in a wood to the pleased beholders. Whose seven aspiring heads (for on so many hills and no more, they say it is seated), are most of them crowned with magnificent mosques, all of white marble, round in form, and coupled above ; being finished on the top with gilded spires that reflect the beams they receive with a marvellous splendour ; some having two, some four, some six adjoining turrets, exceeding high, and exceeding slender, terraced aloft on the outside like the main top of a ship, . . . from thence the Talismanni with elated voices (for they use no bells) do congregate the people, pronouncing this Arabic sentence : *La Illah Illellah Muhemet Re Sul Allah* : viz. : There is but one God and Mahomet his prophet."

The artistic detachment of the seventeenth century often amounted to callousness. Evelyn could enjoy the beauty of the carved and gilded galleys while regarding the chained slaves with mild curiosity rather than horror ; Sandys, who saw some Christian slaves shot, drowned and captured when attempting to escape through the Hellespont in a galley, describes the incident with less emotion than the modern spectator might feel for a drama on stage or screen. He had landed on the European side of the straits to see a local wedding ; the next morning, while still sleeping off the night's celebrations on the ground, he was awoken by the sound of firing to catch sight of this " spectacle," framed, like a picture, between two castles.

" Right against where we lay, and on Europe's side, stands Mayto, called formerly Macidos, and Maditos : a large town, almost together inhabited by Grecians. On the top of a round hill there are the remains of an edifice, whose ruin would persuade that it flourished in the old world's childhood. The inhabitants call it the Virgin Tower : and

that is all they can say thereof. A wedding here in the forenoon, entertained our time in the afternoon. They dance in rings about the musician ; a man, and then a woman, taking hands across, and using variety of not uncomely action : the country wenches clothed in damask and satin, their hair and bosoms set forth with pearl and stones : rich, if not counterfeit. Of these the day following we met with divers carrying pitchers on their heads, and stuck with rags below the condition of poverty. The marriage day they consume in dancing, and the night in feasting : the bride not breaking company until the break of day : and (as they say) not known by her husband until the third night following. The night outwatched made us make a night of the morning, until roused from our ground-beds by the report of a cannon. When from the shore between the castles you might behold a galley passing, and that so leisurely, as if empty, and purposely suffered to drive with the current, rather to exercise the artillery, than manned by men endeavouring safety, and so beset with destruction. At length the sea entered her many breaches, and by little and little devoured the spectacle. The men some slain, some drowned, others by boats from each side cruelly saved ; out-lived to envy their dead companions. These were Christian slaves that hewed stones in the quarries of Marmora : who to compass their liberty, had slain their guardians, and stolen away with the galley."

It is easy to imagine the affecting tale of hope destroyed and tyranny triumphant that a nineteenth-century traveller might have made out of this scene. Art in the nineteenth century was usually associated with sentiment, and science regarded as the enemy of both ; while in the time of Sandys, sentiment was neglected by men of taste, and no conflict was felt to exist between science and art.

It may have been Sandys' lack of sentiment that made him such a shrewd observer. All the glories of Constantinople could not blind him to its precarious condition ; in the manners and administration of the Turks, he detected many signs of decadence. The Turkish forces were, he admits, so large, so well equipped, and so "daringly resolute," that it was to be wondered "how the rest of the yet unvanquished world hath withstood them" ; but in recent years, he points out, they had suffered serious setbacks, which, he considers, were due to the effeteness of the officers : "some one 'Sanziak' having under his conduct five thousand 'Timariots,' and he perhaps but newly crept out of the Sultan's seraglio, exercised only in speculative conflicts." In consequence the huge Turkish armies were ill-directed and unwieldy—"their numbers often prove but cumbers—" and liable to be defeated by much smaller forces of well-organised Christians. In this laxity and confusion he foresaw the ruin of Turkish supremacy :



"And surely it is to be hoped, that their greatness is not only at the height, but near an extreme precipitation: the body being grown too monstrous for the head; the Sultans unwarlike and never accompanying their armies in person; the soldiers corrupted with ease and liberty; drowned in prohibited wine, enfeebled with continual converse of women; and generally lapsed from their former austerity of life, and simplicity of manners."

His prophecies were fulfilled in the course of the next hundred years. Luxury and ease, corruption and disorder, were signs of the steady decline of Turkish power. Frequent mutinies in the army, the rule of young and often feeble-minded Sultans, several times brought the country to the verge of anarchy. But Constantinople flourished in this decay; among the wealthy *bashas* and officials the pleasures of living were brought to a pitch of refinement which amazed even the most sophisticated Europeans.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, familiar with the courts of England, Vienna, and Germany, was entirely captivated by Turkish society when she visited the country in 1716 with her husband who had been appointed ambassador to the Sultan Ahmed III. In the midst of grave national misfortunes Constantinople had never been more elegant. Although the Turkish army was routed that year by the Austrians near Peterwaradin, and much territory lost to Austria and Venice in the ensuing peace, this period became known in Turkish history as the "Tulip Period," owing to the fashionable craze for cultivating tulips. The Sultan, and his grand vizier who was responsible for the humiliating peace treaty, were both celebrated for their taste; Nedim, greatest of Turkish lyric poets, was leader of a new school of literature. Luxurious, sensual and self-indulgent, this civilisation particularly appealed to the English of the period, who loved comfort but had to work so hard to buy it, whose enjoyment of country houses, fine gardens and possessions, leisure and amorous relaxation, so often had to be earned in the rough competition of politics and commerce.

*Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*<sup>1</sup>; *Letters*.

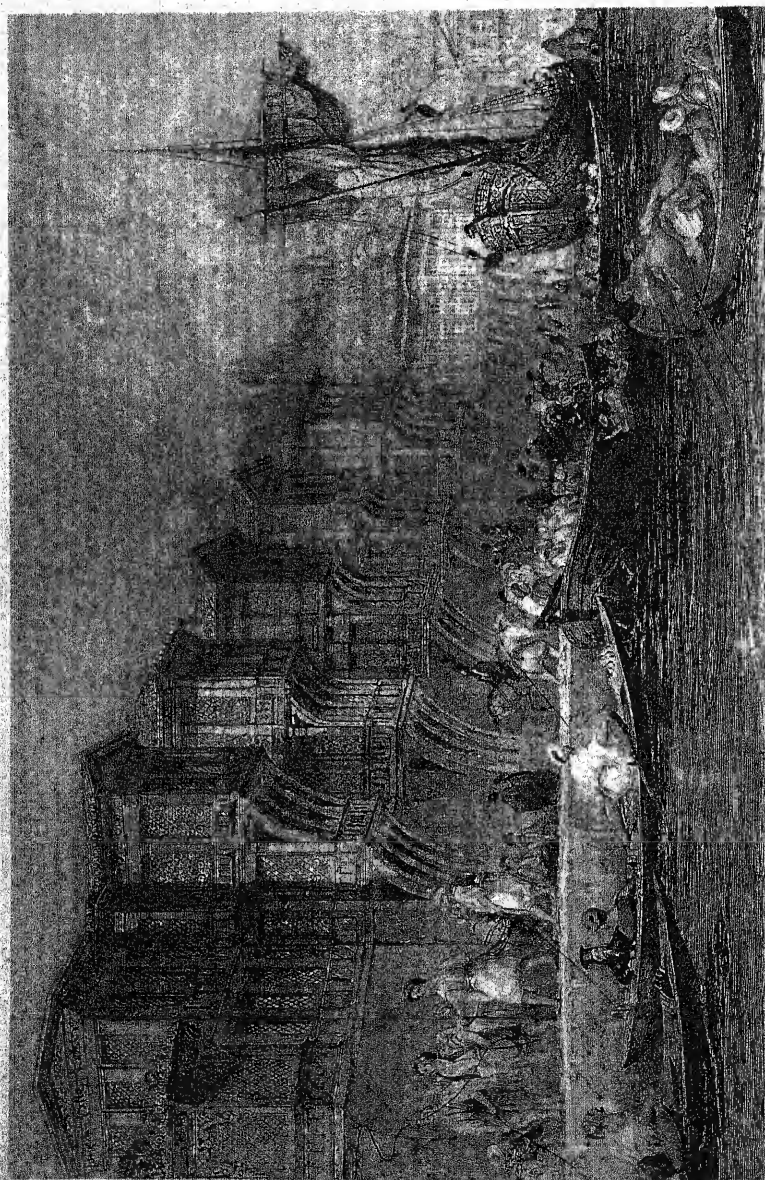
Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the talented wife of an undistinguished public figure, was determined, like that enterprising dilettante Lady Anne Miller, to turn her travelling to good account. With equal energy, but a more subtle intelligence, she set out to acquire an acquaintance with

<sup>1</sup> *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (1689-1762) was for many years a brilliant social figure. Her position was eventually ruined by a scandalous quarrel with Pope, her former admirer, which produced his malicious poem, "Verses addressed to



Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in Turkish dress.  
*From an enamel miniature in the Victoria and Albert Museum. By  
permission. Crown copyright reserved.*

PLATE XII



A palace on the Bosphorus.  
*From a nineteenth century engraving.*



foreign culture and customs that would add to her prestige at home. She was quick to realise that in Turkey she had realised that dream of the intellectually ambitious : an untouched subject. As she wrote to the Abbé Conti, one of her favourite correspondents, soon after her arrival, no one in England knew anything about the country :

“ 'Tis certain we have but very imperfect accounts of the manners and religion of these people ; this part of the world being seldom visited, but by merchants, who mind little but their own affairs ; or travellers, who make too short a stay to be able to report anything exactly of their own knowledge. The Turks are too proud to converse familiarly with merchants, who can only pick up some confused informations, which are generally false, and can give no better account of the ways here, than a French refugee, lodging in a garret in Greek-street, could write of the court of England.”

Her privileged position as an ambassador's wife gave her exceptional facilities for seeing Turkish life, while her educated good taste, which in England had made her the friend of Alexander Pope, enabled her to skim the cream of Turkish and ancient culture. During her year's visit she was received in the houses of great Turkish ladies, saw a whole harem naked in the baths, wore Turkish costume, defied European convention by leaving the diplomatic quarter in Pera to wander about Constantinople veiled in a yashmak, made translations of Turkish love poetry, studied the customs of the people in relation to Pope's version of Homer, collected Greek medals, rose at two in the morning to see the supposed site of Troy, copied Latin inscriptions from ruined monuments, and shipped a collection of ancient marbles home to England.

Turkey made her fame ; but unlike poor Lady Miller, she established her position not only in the social-artistic world of her time, but in the eyes of posterity. Her letters, which delighted her friends, have secured her a high place in English literature ; her Turkish costumes, knick-knacks and miniature paintings, which became the craze of London on her return, helped to launch that fashion for the oriental which was still a powerful influence in the time of Beckford.

It is less well remembered that she introduced a method of inoculation against smallpox that did much to free England from this dangerous and dreaded disease. A crude form of inoculation had long been known to the Turks, who had thereby rendered the illness almost harmless. While in Constantinople she boldly allowed her little boy to

an Imitator of Horace,” and a reply, of which she is supposed to be the author, “A Pop upon Pope.” From 1739 she lived abroad, estranged from her husband. She came in for one of Horace Walpole's spiteful attacks when he met her in Italy. She wrote many delightful letters to her husband and to her daughter, the Countess of Bute.



be inoculated, and learnt how to give the treatment herself. A year after her return, when a particularly bad epidemic broke out, many of her friends applied to her for inoculation; and in spite of the disapproval of the clergy, who objected to this interference with the "course of nature," she and her surgeon treated a great number of people, nearly all of whom lived. It was the Princess of Wales who finally made inoculation respectable. The experiment was to be made on six criminals condemned to death; if they survived, they were to be pardoned, and the treatment regarded as safe for the royal children. The criminals all lived, and the royal children were spared the illness.

The letters of this intelligently daring woman are written with an exhilarating mixture of enthusiasm and sophistication. Critical, in the manner of her age, and even among her contemporaries exceptionally sharp-witted, she enjoyed her experiences too much to lapse into those faults that mar so many eighteenth-century travel writers: petulance, pedantry, and malice. Enjoyment, indeed, is the keynote of her letters, as of the writing of many women travellers—Janet Schaw, for instance, and Mary Kingsley.<sup>1</sup> Men have travelled grumpily, unwillingly, stoically and in boredom, driven abroad by the exigencies of a career, or by the sacred, but usually oppressive "thirst of gain." But to women, at least until recently, travel has been a luxury, a holiday from woman's work—the home—opening the way to experience, knowledge, adventure, notoriety, fame.

Like Lady Hester Stanhope, who in a later age became celebrated as a traveller in the Near East, Lady Mary began by dressing up. A gorgeous Turkish costume, a yashmak, and the transformation was complete: a new person, she ventured into a new world. Thus attired she was able to leave the diplomatic quarter in Pera and cross the water to Constantinople, an expedition which few Europeans were enterprising or inquisitive enough to undertake. The ladies, in particular, were much averse to it, for they were not allowed to enter the city unless their faces were covered, and few of them shared Lady Mary's liking for the yashmak. "The yashmak, or Turkish veil," she wrote, "is not only very easy, but very agreeable to me; and if it was not, I would be content to endure some inconveniency, to gratify a passion that is become so powerful with me, as curiosity."<sup>2</sup>

The view of Constantinople from the sea appeared to her as magnificent as to George Sandys a century earlier, though she describes it in less romantic, but equally graphic, imagery:

"And, indeed, the pleasure of going in a barge to Chelsea, is not comparable to that of rowing upon the canal of the sea here, where, for

<sup>1</sup> See West Africa and the West Indies.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to the Countess of Bristol.

twenty miles together, down the Bosphorus, the most beautiful variety of prospects present themselves. The Asian side is covered with fruit-trees, villages, and the most delightful landscips in nature; on the European, stands Constantinople, situated on seven hills. The unequal heights make it seem as large again as it is (though one of the largest cities in the world) shewing an agreeable mixture of gardens, pine and cypress trees, palaces, mosques, and public buildings, raised one above another, with much beauty and appearance of symmetry, as your ladyship ever saw in a cabinet, adorned by the most skilful hands, where jars show themselves above jars, mixed with cannisters, babies and candlesticks. This is a very odd comparison, but it gives me an exact idea of the thing. I have taken care to see as much of the seraglio as is to be seen. It is on a point of land running into the sea; a palace of prodigious extent, but very irregular. The gardens take in a large compass of ground, full of high cypress trees, which is all I know of them. The buildings are all of white stone, leaded on the top, with gilded turrets and spires, which look very magnificent; and, indeed, I believe there is no Christian king's palace half so large."

The splendour of the Sultan and his court at that period was dazzling. At Adrianople, where the Sultan was for a time in residence, Lady Mary saw him ride in state to the mosque, accompanied by his janissaries, and those important functionaries, the royal gardeners, who made as brilliant a display as the fashionable tulip beds they cultivated:

"I went yesterday along with the French ambassadress to see the Grand Signior in his passage to the mosque. He was preceded by a numerous guard of janissaries, with vast white feathers on their heads, as also by the *spahis* and *bostangees* (these are foot and horse guards) and the royal gardeners, which are a very considerable body of men, dressed in different habits of fine lively colours, so that, at a distance, they appeared like a parterre of tulips. After them the aga of the janissaries, in a robe of purple velvet, lined with silver tissue, his horse led by two slaves richly dressed. Next him the *kyzlier-aga* (your ladyship knows, this is the chief guardian of the seraglio ladies) in a deep yellow cloth (which suited very well his black face) lined with sables. Last came his sublimity himself arrayed in green, lined with the fur of a black muscovite fox, which is supposed worth a thousand pounds sterling, and mounted on a fine horse, with furniture embroidered with jewels. Six more horses richly caparisoned were led after him; and two of his principal courtiers bore, one his gold, and the other his silver coffee-pot, on a staff: another carried a silver stool on his head for him to sit on. It

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Countess of Bristol.

would be too tedious to tell your ladyship the various dresses and turbans by which their rank is distinguished ; but they were all extremely rich and gay to the number of some thousands ; so that perhaps there cannot be seen a more beautiful procession. The Sultan appeared to us a handsome man of about forty, with something however severe in his countenance, and his eyes very full and black. He happened to stop under the window where we stood, and (I suppose being told who we were) looked upon us very attentively, so that we had full leisure to consider him. The French ambassadress agreed with me as to his good mien."

In Constantinople she had the honour of dining with the Sultana Hasiten, widow of the late Sultan, who had been deposed, and, it was thought, murdered by his brother Ahmed III. The Sultana had thereupon been ordered to leave the royal harem and choose another husband, but to demonstrate her loyalty to her deceased husband she had selected a secretary of state over eighty years old. Dinner with his sorrowful ex-queen was boring, but incredibly magnificent.

"I was very glad to observe a lady that had been distinguished by the favour of an emperor, to whom beauties were, every day, presented from all parts of the world. But she did not seem to me, to have been half so beautiful as the fair Fatima I saw at Adrianople, though she had the remains of a fine face, more decayed by sorrow than time."

Her jewellery, however, evoked Lady Mary's unstinted admiration. Her purple cloak was fastened down to her feet with pearls as large as peas linked by diamond loops ; her girdle was entirely embroidered with diamonds ; from a pearl necklace, which reached her knees, hung an emerald "as big as a turkey-egg" ; another necklace consisted of two hundred emeralds, "every one as large as a half-crown piece, and as thick as three crown pieces." Each of the four strings of pearls round her head-dress was as large as the Duchess of Marlborough's necklace ; her earrings were two diamonds, "shaped exactly like pearls, as large as a big hazel-nut" ; and on her fingers she wore the largest rings Lady Mary had ever seen, with the exception of Mr. Pitt's.

"She gave me a dinner of fifty dishes of meat, which (after their fashion) were placed on the table but one at a time, and was extremely tedious. But the magnificence of her table answered very well to that of her dress. The knives were of gold, and the hasps set with diamonds. But the piece of luxury which grieved my eyes, was the table cloth and napkins, which were all of tiffany, embroidered with silk and gold, in

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Countess of Mar.

the finest manner, in natural flowers. It was with the utmost regret that I made use of these costly napkins, which were as finely wrought as the finest handkerchiefs that ever came out of this country. You may be sure, that they were entirely spoiled before dinner was over."

The "fair Fatima," who so far outshone the Sultana, was the wife of a high official with whom Lady Mary had passed a much more amusing evening. Her way of living was lusciously luxurious, her house represented the height of Turkish fashion. The room in which she had received Lady Mary was not so much a room as a pavilion, a skilful combination of indoors and out-of-doors. All round the walls, gilded windows were thrown open onto a garden, which shaded the interior with its trees, and perfumed it with honeysuckle and jasmine. Inside, a white marble fountain threw water into various basins, while the ceiling was painted with flowers tumbling out of gilded baskets. In this seductive setting the fair Fatima reclined in queenly state.

"On a sofa, raised three steps, and covered with fine Turkish carpets, sat the *kahya's*<sup>2</sup> lady, leaning on cushions of white satin, embroidered; and at her feet sat two young girls about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dressed perfectly rich, and almost covered with jewels. But they were hardly to be seen near the fair Fatima (for that is her name) so much her beauty effaced everything I have ever seen, nay, all that has been called lovely either in England or Germany. . . .

"Her fair maids were ranged below the sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the ancient nymphs. I did not think all nature could have furnished such a scene of beauty. She made them a sign to play and dance. Four of them immediately begun to play some soft airs on instruments, between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had seen before. Nothing could be more artful, or more proper to raise certain ideas. The tunes so soft!—the motions so languishing!—accompanied with pauses and dying eyes! half-falling back, and then recovering themselves in so artful a manner, that I am very positive, the coldest and most rigid prude upon earth could not have looked upon them without thinking of something not to be spoke of. . . .

"When I took my leave two maids brought in a fine silver basket of embroidered handkerchiefs; she begged I would wear the richest for her sake, and gave the others to my woman and interpreters. I retired through the same ceremonies, and could not help thinking, I had

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Countess of Mar.

<sup>2</sup> The *kahya* was the second most important official in the Turkish empire.



been some time in Mahomet's paradise ; so much was I charmed with what I had seen."

Indeed, it seemed to her that the Turks had found the secret of life. Despising all strenuous interests, they devoted themselves to the cultivation of pleasure, which, though it might appear rather sickly and monotonous to the modern reader, seemed to her more attractive, and even wiser, than the new scientific endeavours of the West. To the Abbé Conti, just before her departure, she wrote :

" Nothing can be pleasanter than the canal<sup>1</sup> ; and the Turks are so well acquainted with its beauties, that all their pleasure-seats are built on its banks, where they have, at the same time, the most beautiful prospects in Europe and Asia ; there are, near one another, some hundreds of magnificent palaces. Human grandeur being here yet more unstable than anywhere else, 'tis common for the heirs of a great three-tailed Basha, not to be rich enough to keep in repair the house he built ; thus, in a few years, they all fall to ruin. I was yesterday to see that of the late Grand Vizier, who was killed at Peterwaradin. It was built to receive his royal bride, daughter of the present Sultan ; but he did not live to see her there. I have a great mind to describe it to you ; but I check that inclination, knowing very well that I cannot give you, with my best description, such an idea of it as I ought. It is situated on one of the most delightful parts of the canal, with fine wood on the side of a hill behind it. The extent of it is prodigious ; the guardian assured me, there are eight hundred rooms in it ; I will not, however, answer for that number, since I did not count them ; but 'tis certain the number is very large, and the whole adorned with a profusion of marble, gilding, and the most exquisite painting of fruit and flowers. The windows are all sashed with the finest crystalline glass brought from England ; and here is all the expensive magnificence that you can suppose in a palace founded by a vain luxurious young man, with the wealth of a vast empire at his command. But no part of it pleased me better than the apartments destined for the bagnios. There are two built in exactly the same manner, answering to one another ; the baths fountains, and pavements, all of white marble, the roofs gilt, and the walls covered with Japan china. Adjoining them are two rooms, the uppermost of which is divided into a sofa ; and in the four corners are falls of water from the very roof, from shell to shell, of white marble, to the lower end of the room, where it falls into a large basin, surrounded with pipes, that throw up the water as high as the roof. The walls are in the nature of lattices ; and, on the outside of them, there are vines and woodbines planted, that form a sort of green tapestry, and give an agreeable obscurity to those delightful chambers. I should go on and let you

<sup>1</sup> The Bosphorus.

into some of the other apartments (all worthy of your curiosity); but 'tis yet harder to describe a Turkish palace than any other, being built entirely irregular. There is nothing that can be properly be called front or wings; and though such a confusion is, I think, pleasing to the sight, yet it would be very unintelligible in a letter. I shall only add, that the chamber destined for the Sultan, when he visits his daughter, is wainscotted with mother of pearl, fastened with emeralds like nails. There are others of mother of pearl and olive wood inlaid, and several of Japan china. The galleries, which are numerous, and very large, are adorned with jars of flowers, and porcelain dishes of fruit of all sorts, so well done in plaster, and coloured in so lively a manner, that it has an enchanting effect. The garden is suitable to the house, where arbours, fountains and walks are thrown together in an agreeable confusion. There is no ornament wanting, except that of statues.

"Thus you see, Sir, these people are not so unpolished as we represent them. 'Tis true, their magnificence is of a different taste from ours, and perhaps of a better. I am almost of opinion, they have a right notion of life. They consume it in music, gardens, wine, and delicate eating, while we are tormenting our brains with some scheme of politics, or studying some science to which we can never attain, or, if we do, cannot persuade other people to set that value upon it we do ourselves. 'Tis certain, what we feel and see is properly (if anything is properly) our own; but the good of fame, the folly of praise, are hardly purchased, and, when obtained, a poor recompense for loss of time and health. We die or grow old before we can reap the fruit of our labours. Considering what short-lived weak animals men are, is there any study so beneficial as the study of present pleasure? I dare not pursue this theme; perhaps I have already said too much, but I depend upon the true knowledge you have of my heart. I don't expect from you the insipid raileries I should suffer from another in answer to this letter. You know how to divide the idea of pleasure from that of vice, and they are only mingled in the heads of fools.—But I allow you to laugh at me for the sensual declaration in saying, that I had rather be a rich essendi, with all his ignorance, than Sir Isaac Newton with all his knowledge."

Another century of this voluptuous stagnation ruined Turkish civilisation and Turkish power. While the western nations profited from the new developments in science, industry, and learning, Turkey, which had been well advanced in the time of Soliman the Magnificent, rejected all modern progress. Technical processes remained mediæval, few new books on philosophy, mathematics or history were printed; the people refused to learn European languages, and most of the officials were illiterate. Bribery on an almost unbelievable scale, and continual risings

of the janissaries kept the country in permanent disorder. The incessant wars in defence of the empire, against Persia, Venice, Austria, and Russia, brought no lasting advantages. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the struggle with Russia turned into a serious defeat, which was confirmed in the humiliating peace treaties which were forced upon the country during the reign of Abdul-Hamid I,<sup>1</sup> who had come to the throne feeble-minded, after spending forty-three years in a cage. His successor, Selim III, the only prince in the last two centuries who had not been caged, struggled to introduce many overdue reforms; but he was deposed by a reactionary group, and all his innovations abolished. Meanwhile war continued with Russia, yet more territory was lost, and the partition of Turkey was discussed by the European powers. At the Congress of Vienna it was suggested that the frontiers of Turkey should be fixed and guaranteed by international agreement, it being thought that the dismemberment of the empire would lead to another European war. But the Sultan turned down this proposal as a piece of foreign impertinence, and the rival ambitions of the European powers, each competing for a share in the disintegrating Turkish empire, produced the "Eastern Question" which dominated nineteenth-century European politics.

During this time of defeat and decay even the renowned capital lost much of its glamour for the outside world. Travellers, though unable to deny the fine situation of the city, were no longer impressed by the splendour of Turkish life. As late as 1763, Lord Baltimore, a cultured nobleman touring the Levant for the sake of his health, noted that the streets of Constantinople "though not so clean as those of the Hague, are not so dirty as those were in London," and that "the police of this city is, in many respects, beyond that of any other"; but subsequent visitors invariably complained of the backwardness and discomfort of the city, the absence of any intellectual diversions, the danger of plague, and above all, the dirt. Robert Curzon, when the Patriarch of the Greek Church offered him one of the richly embroidered napkins which so impressed Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, observed: "I prefer on these occasions my pocket-handkerchief, as the period at which these rich towels are washed is by no means a matter of certainty," and this remark is typical of the changed attitude of European travellers.

*Robert Curzon<sup>2</sup>; Visits to Monasteries in the Levant. (Pub. 1849.)*

The object of Curzon's journey was to explore the libraries of ancient

<sup>1</sup> Abdul-Hamid I, reigned 1773-1789.

<sup>2</sup> *Robert Curzon* (1810-1873), 14th Baron Zouche. He travelled in the Near East 1833-7. In 1841 he was appointed attaché to the British embassy at Constantinople, and he subsequently held other minor official posts in the Near East.

Greek and Coptic monasteries, and to purchase, whenever possible, early books and manuscripts. This sober quest led him into fantastic adventures; few travellers have enjoyed more curious experiences in that highly-coloured region, the Levant. The monasteries he visited, monuments of the persecuted and self-mortifying period of Christianity, had mostly been built in the safety of inaccessible sites, on cliffs and precipices and the summits of rocky pinnacles: the Convent of the Pulley, standing on a precipice two hundred feet above the Nile, could only be reached by climbing the almost perpendicular funnel of a cave; the ascent to others was by perilous ladders, or in nets dragged up by ropes. In these forgotten sanctuaries, priceless manuscripts, neglected or ignored by the impoverished, illiterate and debased communities of monks, lay rotting in ruins, cellars and vaults. Once he found a superb Coptic manuscript used as a covering for a jar of preserves; in the secrecy of the night he crossed the plain of Thebes, littered gruesomely with the bones of pillaged graves, to examine a hoard of manuscript hidden in the vast subterranean chamber of an ancient tomb. Egypt, Albania, Palestine, Greece, the Greek islands all revealed weird and beautiful scenes. His admirably written book is full of unforgettable pictures: the needle rocks of Meteora, in Albania, crowned with dilapidated monasteries, riddled with caves, once inhabited, like pigeon holes, by flocks of ascetic anchorites; scarecrow Abyssinian monks, their black emaciated bodies smeared with oil, chanting uncouth music in a battlemented monastery deep in the Nitrian desert; the fortress monasteries of Mount Athos, perched on cliffs of dazzling marble and alabaster above the curling dark blue waters of the Ægean.

Moreover Curzon had that taste for the macabre characteristic of young literary Englishmen of the early nineteenth century. Indeed, he seems to have been unable to avoid sinister experiences. In Jerusalem he was present on the occasion of the notorious disaster that occurred in 1834 on Easter Sunday of the Greek Orthodox Church, when the pilgrims assembled in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the miracle of the Holy Fire became possessed by a maniacal frenzy, and many hundreds were suffocated or stampeded to death. In Constantinople he witnessed a hideous incident of one of the frequent plagues:

"It was about this time that two Jews—poor men, whom consequently nobody cared about—were walking together in a narrow street at Galata, when they both dropped down stricken with the plague; there they lay upon the ground; no one would touch them; and, as the street was extremely narrow, no one could pass that way; it was

Besides his *Monasteries of the Levant*, he published *Armenia*, another record of his personal experiences (1854), "The Purple Falcon," a poem in the archaic style supposed to be translated from an oriental MS. (1847), and a book on the history of handwriting, one of his favourite subjects.



in effect blocked up by the two unhappy men. They did not die quickly. 'The devil was sure of them,' the charitable people said, 'so he was in no hurry.' There they lay a long time—many days; and people called to them, and put their heads round the corner of the street to look at them. Some, tenderer-hearted than the rest, got a long pole from a dyer's shop hard by, and pushed a tub of water to them, and threw them some bread, for no one dared to approach them. One Jew was quiet: he ate a little bread and drank some water, and lay still. The other was violent: the pain of his livid swellings drove him wild, and he shouted and raved and twisted about upon the ground. The people looked at him from the corner, and shuddered as they quickly drew back their heads. He died; and the other Jew still lay there, quiet as he was before, close to the quiet corpse of his poor friend. For some time they did not know whether he was dead or not; but at last they found he drank no more water and ate no more bread; so they knew that he had died also. There lay the two bodies in the way, till someone paid a hamal—a Turkish porter—who, being a staunch predestinarian, caring neither for plague, nor Jew, nor gentile, dead or alive, carried off the two bodies on his back; and then the street was passable again."

Constantinople, the city that once represented the European ideal of stately luxury, had come to be regarded as little better than a slum. A traveller of romantic inclinations, such as Robert Curzon, might be fascinated by its squalor; but the reaction of the majority was irritation, and a consciousness of British superiority.

*E. D. Clarke, LL.D.<sup>1</sup>; Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. (Pub. 1817.)*

Dr. E. D. Clarke, another travelling collector, but one devoid of Curzon's imagination and sensibility, felt himself thoroughly deceived by the city:

"Everything is exaggerated that has been said of the riches and magnificence of this city. Its inhabitants are ages behind the rest of the world. The apartments of their houses are always small. . . . The menagerie shown to strangers is the most filthy in Europe, and is chiefly tenanted by rats. . . . The boasted illuminations of Ramadam would scarcely be perceived, if they were not pointed out. The suburbs of London are more brilliant every night of the year."

<sup>1</sup> *E. D. Clarke, LL.D. (1769-1822)*, travelled extensively in Europe, Russian Egypt and Palestine. He brought back many antiquities: statues, MSS., and sarcophagi which he presented to Cambridge University and sold to the Bodleian and the British Museum. In 1808 he was appointed the first professor of mineralogy at Cambridge.

Dr. Clarke's disillusionment, however, is more complete, and much more entertaining, than that of the many disgruntled travellers of the period; for he is the only Englishman to have succeeded in paying a surreptitious visit to the Sultan's seraglio. Into this forbidden palace, of which only the outer courts were known to ambassadors and foreign princes, pedantic, painstaking Dr. Clarke was smuggled early morning. It was during Ramadam; the guards, having feasted all night, lay fast asleep. Conducted by a German gardener employed in the seraglio Dr. Clarke boldly landed in the cypress groves on the shore of the Bosphorus, entered the private gardens of the Sultan, examined his famous kiosk or summer-house near the shore, and even more daringly explored the apartments of the harem. All the imagined luxuries and rarities, the secrets that for centuries had teased the curiosity of the world, were at last laid bare: and what did he find? A lumber-house of trashy treasures, sordid and pretentious; a setting of tyranny without splendour.

So that this adventure might be fully recorded, Dr. Clarke took with him a certain Monsieur Preaux, a French artist with an exceptional facility for making very rapid sketches. But although they returned home in safety M. Preaux was so frightened by what he had done that he could never be persuaded to produce his drawings: either concealed or destroyed, they were never seen by anyone again.

"We left Pera, in a gondola, about seven o'clock in the morning; embarking at Tophana, and steering towards that gate of the Seraglio which faces the Bosphorus on the south-eastern side. . . . Upon entering the Seraglio, the spectator is struck by a wild and confused assemblage of great and interesting objects: among the first of these are, enormous cypresses, massive and lofty masonry, neglected and broken soroi; high rising mounds, and a long gloomy avenue, leading from the gates of the garden between the double walls of the Seraglio."

But the gardens appeared to them meagre and ill-kept:

"On the right hand, are the large wooden folding doors of the Grand Signior's gardens; and near them lie many fragments of ancient marbles, appropriated to the vilest purposes. . . . Entering the gardens by the folding doors, a pleasing *coup d'œil* of trellis-work and covered walks is displayed, more after the taste of the natives of Holland, than of those of any other country. Various and very despicable jets d'eau, straight gravel walks, and borders disposed into parallelograms, with the addition of a long green-house filled with orange trees, compose all that appears within the small spot which bears the name of the Seraglio Gardens. . . . The trellis-work is of wood, painted white, and covered by jasmine; and this, as it does not conceal the artificial frame by which it is supported, produces a wretched effect. On the outside of the trellis-work appear

small parterres, edged with box, containing very common flowers, and adorned with fountains."

The Sultan's kiosk on the sea-shore, which Thomas Gainsford, two centuries earlier, had esteemed "the delicatest and richest" building he had ever seen, so that he was "persuaded" that there was "not such a bird-cage in the world," pleased Dr. Clarke better, though his description conveys a bleak and slightly frowsty impression.

"It is situate on the sea-shore, and commands one of the finest views the eye ever beheld, of Scutari and of the adjoining Asiatic coast, the mouth of the Canal, and a moving picture of ships and gondolas, with all the floating pageantry of this vast metropolis, such as no other capital in the world can pretend to exhibit. The kiosk itself, fashioned after the airy fantastic style of Eastern architecture, presents a spacious chamber, covered by a dome; from which, towards the sea, advances a raised platform surrounded by windows, and terminated by a divan. From the centre of the dome is suspended a large lustre, presented by the English ambassador. Above the raised platform hangs another lustre of smaller size, but more elegant. Immediately over the sofas of the divan are mirrors engraved with Turkish inscriptions—poetry, and passages from the Koran. The sofas are of white satin, beautifully embroidered by the women of the Seraglio. . . .

"A small staircase leads from these apartments, to two chambers below, paved with marble, and as cold as any cellar. Here a more numerous assemblage of women are buried, as it were, during the heat of summer. The first is a sort of antechamber to the other; by the door of which, in a nook of the wall, are placed the Sultan's slippers, of common yellow morocco, and coarse workmanship. Having entered the marble chamber immediately below the kiosk, a marble basin presents itself, with a fountain in the centre, containing water to the depth of about three inches, and a few very small fishes. Answering to the platform mentioned in the description of the kiosk, is another, exactly of a similar nature, closely latticed, where the ladies sit during the season of their residence in this place. We were pleased with observing a few things they had carelessly left upon the sofas, and which characterised their mode of life. Among these was an English writing-box, of black varnished wood, with a sliding cover, and drawers; the drawers containing coloured writing paper, reed pens, perfumed wax, and little bags made of embroidered satin, in which their *billets-doux* are sent, by negro slaves, who are both mutes and eunuchs. That liqueurs are drunk in these secluded chambers is evident; for we found labels from bottles, neatly cut out with scissors bearing Turkish inscriptions, with the words 'Rosoglio,' 'Golden Water,' and 'Water of Life.' These we carried off as trophies of our visit to the place, and distributed them among our friends."

They were next taken to the summer apartments of the harem, the women being then in their winter quarters. This was the most dangerous part of the expedition, for discovery would have meant instant death. Remembering the fate of Le Bruyn, an eighteenth-century traveller who had been put to death for examining the seraglio through a telescope from his house in Constantinople, they crept apprehensively across the garden :

" Having inspected every alley and corner of the garden, we advanced, half-breathless, and on tiptoe, to the great wooden door of this mysterious edifice. We succeeded in forcing this open ; but the noise of its grating hinges, amidst the profound silence of the place, went to our very hearts. We then entered a small quadrangle, much resembling that of Queen's College, Cambridge, filled with weeds. . . . Everything appeared in a neglected state. The women reside here only during the summer. Their winter apartments may be compared to the late Bastille of France ; and the decoration of these apartments is even inferior to that we are about to describe. From this court, forcing open a small window near the ground, and having climbed into the building, we arrived upon a long range of wooden beds, or couches, covered with mats, prepared for the reception of a hundred slaves, which reached the whole extent of a very long corridor. . . . We went from the lower dormitory of the slaves to another above it : this was divided into two tiers ; so that one half of the numerous attendants it was designed to accommodate slept over the other, upon a sort of shelf or scaffold near to the ceiling."

Squalid slave-dormitories and narrow corridors covered in matting were succeeded by state apartments which displayed an odd mixture of seediness and barbaric pomp. The Chamber of Audience, for instance, where the Sultan Mother received visits of ceremony from the Sultanas, appeared to Dr. Clarke as : " exactly such an apartment as the best painters of scenic decoration would have selected, to afford a striking idea of the pomp, the seclusion, and the magnificence, of the Ottoman court. . . . It was surrounded with enormous mirrors, the costly donations of infidel kings,. . . . These mirrors the women of the Seraglio sometimes break, in their frolics. . . . At the upper end is the throne, a sort of cage, in which the Sultana sits, surrounded by latticed blinds ; for even here her person is held too sacred to be exposed to the common observation of slaves and females of the Harem. A lofty flight of broad steps, covered with crimson cloth, leads to this cage, as to a throne. Immediately in front of the cage are two burnished chairs of state, covered with crimson velvet and gold, one on each side of the entrance." But in the Assembly Room of the Sultan the ornaments displayed : " that strange mixture of magnificence and wretchedness, which characterises all the state chambers of Turkish grandees."



One of the more magnificent ornaments was a large coloured lustre presented by Lord Elgin. It was however suspended by a common rope, and when the ladies of the harem moved into this palace during the summer, it was always removed, for fear that it should be damaged in the same way as the mirrors. Much of the more valuable furniture had suffered this fate.

The baths of the Sultan Mother Dr. Clarke considered luxurious, as befitted a people "of all others best versed in the ceremonies of the bath"; but the Chamber of Repose, with a splendid view onto the sea, was "in the state of an old lumber-room."

"Large dusty pier-glasses, in heavy gilded frames, neglected and broken, had been left, leaning against the wall, the whole length of one side of the room. Old furniture; shabby bureaus of the worst English work, made of oak, walnut, or mahogany; inlaid cabinets; scattered fragments of chandeliers; scraps of paper, silk rags, and empty confectionery boxes; were the only objects in this part of the palace."

Re-entering the court-yard, on their way out, Dr. Clarke and his companion narrowly escaped detection. They were saved by an event as much out of keeping with the splendour of palace life as anything they had seen in the dilapidated apartments:

"The Reader may imagine our consternation, upon finding that the great door was shut, and that we were locked in. Listening to ascertain if any one was stirring, we discovered that a slave had entered to feed some turkeys, who were gobbling and making a great noise at a small distance. We profited by their tumult, to force back the huge locks of the gate with a large stone; and this fortunately yielding to our blows, we made our escape."

But they none the less found courage to linger in the Garden of Hyacinths in order to look through the window of a pavilion, the private apartment of the Sultan, where he spent most of his leisure hours. Nothing, they thought, could have been more magnificent than this interior, although to the modern reader this magnificence is of a rather horrifying kind:

"Three sides of it were surrounded by a divan, the cushions and pillows of which were of black embroidered satin. Opposite to the windows of the chamber was a fire-place, constructed after the European fashion; and on each side of this, a door covered with hangings of crimson cloth. Between each of these doors and the fire-place appeared a glass case, containing the Sultan's private library; . . . From the ceiling . . . which was of burnished gold, . . . were suspended three gilt cages, containing small figures of artificial birds; which sung by

mechanism. In the centre of the room stood an enormous gilt brasier, supported, in an ewer, by four massive claws, like the vessels for containing water which are seen under sideboards in England. . . . The floor was covered with Gobelins tapestry ; . . . Groups of arms, such as pistols, sabres, and poignards, were disposed, with very singular taste and effect, over the different compartments of the walls ; their handles and scabbards being covered with diamonds of very large size, which, as they glittered around, produced a splendid effect in this most sumptuous chamber."

After a glance at an aviary of nightingales they made their way back to the sea, passing through formal gardens "laid out in worse taste than the forecourt of a Dutchman's house in the suburbs of the Hague," and an old kiosk where they saw : "a very ordinary marble slab, supported on iron cramps, which, nevertheless, was a present from Charles the Twelfth of Sweden. It is precisely the sort of sideboard seen in the poorest inns in England ; and, while it may be said that no person would pay half the amount of its freight to send it back again, it shews the nature of the presents that were then made to the Porte by foreign princes."

A hundred years later the Turkish Sultans had lost even the illusion of glory and power. The disasters of the nineteenth century, during which the empire was steadily diminished by war, revolt, and foreign interference, produced the reforming movement which overthrew the autocratic rule of the Sultans in 1908. But the constitutional government inaugurated by the Young Turks came too late to save the empire ; the defeats in the Balkan Wars, followed by the Great War, reduced Turkey to a condition of helpless anarchy which lasted until the accession of Mustafa Kemal and the proclamation of a republic in 1923.

With the fall of the old régime the aristocratic, idle, luxurious civilisation of palaces, gardens and harems was inevitably destroyed. Harold Armstrong, stationed in Constantinople with the Allied forces after the Armistice of 1918, saw the beginnings of the new, westernised social life, which, he observed, had come not so much through revolutionary opinion, as, quietly and undramatically, through economic change.

*Harold Armstrong*<sup>1</sup> ; *Turkey in Travail*. (Pub. 1925.)

"There were quaint forbidden tea-parties in Chilchi, the suburb of Pera, to which came Turkish ladies just reaching out to grasp their new found liberty. They encouraged me to talk my broken Turkish. They

<sup>1</sup> Captain Harold Armstrong, O.B.E., B.A. Oxon (1892-1943), held various British official posts in Turkey and the Near East, and published a number of books ; among them, *Grey Wolf*, a life of Mustafa Kemal.

cooed and complimented me on a fluency that I did not possess, until I grew hot and awkward and my field-boots seemed long and my spurs caught in the fringes of the ridiculous furniture. Their rooms were arranged in Victorian fashion with hard straight chairs and useless tables and pictures in shell frames and fans and feathers. When we had talked of the weather and my extensive knowledge of Turkish, there was little left to be said. In cool rooms that shut out the dusty streets and the blazing sun they sat with folded hands. . . they were dainty, exquisite and scented. Their eyes were black and deep, their skins white as alabaster, and where it stretched over the bones the blue veins showed through. They were aristocratic and courteous, but incredibly dull, except that sometimes a topic would touch politics or war or the Nationalists, and then their bodies would stiffen and the languid depth would go out of their eyes and they would be alive; for they love and hate well, and are fierce, cruel and fanatical patriots.

"The old order and the harems were gone. Economic considerations had destroyed them. 'In the old days,' said one dame, 'there were palaces and gardens and slaves and servants and these things might have been, but how can my husband expect to shut me up in a two-roomed flat?'". . .

In the reconstructed Turkey of Mustafa Kemal, Constantinople lost much of its importance. As a result of intense nationalist sentiment, Angora, far away in the interior of Anatolia, became the capital, while Constantinople was deliberately neglected. Harold Armstrong, visiting Turkey again some years later, found Constantinople an abandoned city, still harbouring vestiges of the old-fashioned Turkish life, and still beautiful, though with the romantic beauty of desolation and decay.

*Harold Armstrong ; Turkey and Syria Reborn. (Pub. 1930.)*

"A steamer took me up the Bosphorus, between its steep, hilly shores covered with gardens and white chalets, with quaint villages and palaces. The first dolphins coming north dived and played round the ship.

"At Yeni Keuy I visited old friends; heaved on the handle of a bell until a wire creaked across a big garden and in the distance a bell rang. A veiled woman opened the door carefully, and then went with my message, and after a while I was admitted.

"The garden was a jungle. The old palace and the terrace on the water's edge, where the gulls wheeled and settled and quarrelled, were broken and dishevelled.

"Here I had walked with a Turkish woman and lived and planned a novel. From the terrace I had rowed and talked softly under the

warm, dark night with veiled women when that was forbidden—ten years before, when the Armistice was young, and we dreamed dreams of a New World.

"My friends were as courteous as of old. One was a huge man, a major renowned for his courage, and who had fought in the Tripoli and Balkan wars. His wife was a fierce old dowager who had held up a platoon of British soldiers who came to search her house in 1920, with an ancient sword. The older women were veiled. The younger wore the Russian bandeau and were uncovered.

"With infinite dignity we performed all the old courtesies. We drank coffee with due ceremony, and talked of the weather and non-controversial subjects.

"These people were living the old, shut-away, aristocratic life of the days before the war, but their world was breaking down under them as the palace in which they lived and the terrace were slipping gradually into the swift Bosphorus current. Yet there was a peace and a dignity as we sat in that old-world garden in the late sun, and a nightingale began to sing in a bush, and the first lilacs were scenting the air, which made me sad as I took the road back to Pera; but I knew that all this life was dead and must be shovelled aside. . . .

"The anchorage by Leander's Town, and the wharves and quays beside Serkedji station and Galata were empty. Only an odd ship or two lay out in the stream. Constantinople, the thriving, bustling port of the past, with its cargoes for the Crimea, Russia, and the Caucasus and Bulgaria, was empty and desolate. . . .

"And the government had set out to ruin the city. Its people had opposed the transfer of the capital to Angora; it was full of officials and merchants who were impoverished and disgruntled by the new order of things. Its sympathies were against the government. Angry at its attitude, the present rulers had determined to ruin Constantinople, the great port, the main source of income, even though its ruin meant the bankruptcy of all Turkey. Its importance was reduced, its trade deliberately made difficult.

"I took ship for Smyrna, and as we slid past Seraglio Point I looked back. I saw that the city could not be killed, even though it could for a while be tied down and gagged. It was still *Der Saadet*, the Gate of Happiness. Long after the Turkish Republic would have disappeared into the mists of history it would still sit here majestically on its hills, a Pearl of Beauty, a Royal City, with the sea round its feet, and the wealth of all the countries filling its harbours.

"At the moment its spirit was damped down and it lay helpless and desolate."



#### 4. ASIA

AS FAR east as Palestine the world was certainly known to English travellers from the time of St. Willibald<sup>1</sup>, the West Saxon pilgrim who between 722 and 725 A.D. made the first recorded journey from England to Jerusalem. During the following centuries of the middle ages, pious Englishmen year after year flocked across Europe to the Holy Land, travelling over the Alpine passes, through the sumptuous mercantile city of Venice, from island to island of the eastern Mediterranean. Gradually this mass travelling became organised; hospices and refuges were set up at intervals on the routes most frequently used, associations such as the Knights of St. John provided free assistance. In an era when knowledge of the rest of the world was only mythical; when the east was a glittering legend, the west, a vacant sea, the south an uninhabitable torrid zone,<sup>2</sup> and the whole surrounded by an infinite terrible ocean, the way to Jerusalem was a familiar thoroughfare. In spite of the inevitable hardships—the danger of Moorish pirates, and the insulting and extortionate practices of the Mohammedan rulers of Palestine—until pilgrimages were condemned by the Reformation, ever-increasing numbers of Englishmen undertook this perilous journey to the threshold of Asia.

The first authentic travel book in the English language recounts a typical pilgrimage, performed by a country gentleman priest from Mulberton, in Norfolk, in 1517. Sir Richard Torkington tells in naïve prose and extravagant spelling how he travelled to Jerusalem by the usual stages, gave thanks, prayed and repented, and was conducted by the friars of Mount Sion to the holy places of Jerusalem and the surrounding country. This journal is unique in English travel literature. Written before the English Reformation, by a man untouched by those two passions of the renaissance, scientific curiosity and greed for luxury, it forms an extreme contrast to the writings of the audacious merchant-adventurers, the inquisitive scholars, the arrogant officials and discerning or sceptical tourists who in later periods poured out of England to discover and use the world. Torkington travelled in a mood of humility, humility—the antithesis of curiosity. To him, as to many others who had gone before him, Jerusalem was the centre of the world; concentrating on his single aim, to visit the places hallowed by Christian tradition, he ignored everything else. Although he was not unhardy—his journey

<sup>1</sup> See Sir Percy Sykes' *The Quest for Cathay*.

<sup>2</sup> This mediæval belief was of course dispelled by the great Spanish and Portuguese voyages of discovery in the late fifteenth century (see Robert Thorne).

on horseback across Europe, the storms that beset him in the Mediterranean, the ill-usages he suffered from the Turks, were no small ordeals—he was also unassuming; mild but indomitable, he was sustained by faith and singleness of purpose.

*Sir Richard Torkington ; Pilgrimage.*<sup>1</sup>

Voicing the sentiments of countless generations of pilgrims, Torkington describes the glorious moment when he first caught sight of the Holy Land ;

“Saturday, the 11th of July, about four of the clock at afternoon, we had sight of the Holy Land. Then the mariners sang the litany, and after all that the pilgrims with cheerful voice sang the *Te Deum* Lawidamus, and thanked Almighty God that he had given us such grace to have once sight of the most holy land.”

But before they could land, they had to bargain with the Turkish officials for the sum to be paid by the whole party as tribute. Even this did not exempt them from further humiliations, for the Turks, who had taken possession of Palestine the previous year, only tolerated Christians on account of the money they brought into the country and ill-treated them on principle. Torkington and his fellow-pilgrims were forced to spend their first night sleeping on “the stinking stable ground,” and during their journey, riding asses, to Jerusalem, they were constantly bullied and exploited.

In Jerusalem, however, they were kindly received by the friars of Mount Sion; wine, which Torkington in spite of his simple habits much appreciated, was provided free of charge, and carpets as mattresses. In the company of the friars they saw the holy places of Jerusalem, heard, and accepted, all the sacred legends attached to them at this period before such beliefs were questioned or discouraged. There was the place for instance: “where our Blessed Lady stood when she met her son bearing his cross, where for over much sorrow and dolour of heart she suddenly fell into a swoon and forgetfulness of her mind, and this holy place is called *Sancta Maria de Spasimo*. Saint Elyn<sup>2</sup> builded a church there, but it is down. And the Sarrazins have often attempted to build there, but their edifying would not stand in no wise.”

<sup>1</sup> Torkington's crisp straightforward style has hardly dated, but the same cannot be said for his spelling, which is both archaic and erratic. Believing that it is more interesting for the reader to grasp his meaning easily, than to grope for it through an archaic obscurity, however quaint, I have modernised the spelling of all words that are still in use. Archaic words, or forms of words, and proper names, I have left in his own spelling, which will indicate the difficulties of reading the original.

<sup>2</sup> St. Helena.

Such tales seemed to the single-hearted Torkington perfectly logical. Biblical events were so much alive to him that he seems to have been hardly aware of time. On his way to Bethlehem he noted: "A place where the angel took up Abacok by the front and bare him to Babaylon and set him in the lake of lions were Danyell the prophet was, and refreshed him with meat and drink." On his return journey he paused to examine the spot where David slew Goliath, and "Salomon's archezard,<sup>1</sup> which is yet a delectable place."

Places connected with the childhood of Christ aroused in him a touching and very human devotion, such as "the fountain where our Blessed Lady was wont to wash her clothes, and the clothes of our blessed saviour in his childhood." The supreme moment, therefore, of his pilgrimage, was his visit to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. So holy was this place that when a certain Sultan had attempted to pillage the church, a miraculous sign had come to strike him with terror:

"The Sawdon was in purpose to a removed those pillars, and to a carried them to have builded his place with the same. And for that intent he came to Bethlehem in his own person to take them down. And he beheld the masons beginning to break. So duly there came out of the church wall within forth nigh there the Sawdon was, an huge serpent that ran endlong upon the right side of the church wall, and scorched the said wall as it had been singed with fire all the way that he went, which scorching is to be seen to this day.

"And with this sign the Sawdon avoided with great fear, and all those that were with him, and never sythens he nor any other attempted to remove anything else."

When, carrying lighted tapers, the pilgrims walked in procession to the chapel built on the very spot where Christ was born, Torkington knew that he had reached the goal of his long and painful travels:

"And from this place, descending certain grees of stone, we came into a wonder fair little chapel, at the higher altar whereof, is the very place of the birth of our Lord, assigned by a star made in fair white marble stone. Under the myddus of the said high altar, which birth was done in the self most holy place to the greatest joy and gladness that ever came to mankind. And at that place is clean remission.

"And a little before the said altar is the crib of our Lord, where our blessed lady laid her dear son before her, the ox, and the ass. Clean remission.

"And undoubted this little chapel of the birth of our Lord is the most glorious and devout place that is in the world, so much that that exceedeth in holiness all other places that be in this world."

<sup>1</sup> Solomon's orchard.

During those centuries when European pilgrims were intimately acquainted with every mile, almost every stone, of the Holy Land, beyond the Jordan, that traditional frontier between the familiar and the unknown, all was mystery. Until the Portuguese invaded the shores of the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century Asia was to the European mind no more than a mirage of hopes and legends. It is true that a few European travellers had ventured overland to China between the mid-thirteenth and mid-fourteenth centuries, when Central Asia was united and pacified during the short period of the Mongul Empire, and that Marco Polo had written a detailed account of his reception at the court of Kubilai Khan.<sup>1</sup> But this connection with the East was broken before Europe had time to take advantage of it: with the collapse of the Mongul Empire the trans-Asiatic caravan routes once again became impracticable, and the knowledge of Asia brought back by these few enterprising travellers became confused with earlier rumours and dreams.<sup>2</sup>

Great wealth was known to exist there, for within human memory Asia had been the source of all that was rich and luxurious.<sup>3</sup> Silks and perfumes and spices, diamonds and pearls and sapphires, all these had come to Europe from the East through the hands of Arab and Venetian merchants, together with tales of mighty empire, and monarchs who lived in unimaginable splendour. Mandeville, the fanciful travel writer of the fourteenth century, mingling accounts of recent travellers to China with ancient gossip and invention, told of male and female

<sup>1</sup> The Mongul court was visited by the friar John Plano de Carpini in 1246, and by the friar William de Rubruquis 1253-54. In 1266 Niccolo and Maffeo Polo, Venetian jewellers, visited Kubilai Khan, after being held up three years at Bokhara on the way. In 1275 they were again received by Kubilai Khan at his summer palace at Shang-tu (Coleridge's Xanadu), and later at, this new capital of Cambaluc, —Peking. They were accompanied by Niccolo's son, Marco, who entered the service of the Great Khan, was employed on many missions, and travelled all over China, to Shensi, Szechuen, Yunnan and also to northern Burma. The Polos remained in China seventeen years and accumulated great wealth. Later various missionaries established themselves in China. Friar John de Corvino spent many years there in the early 14th century, made many converts, and built a church in Peking, where he became archbishop. Friar Odoric de Pordenone visited China between 1317 and 1330; Mandeville's descriptions of Peking and of the Far East are largely derived from his journal.

<sup>2</sup> During the period between the fall of the Mongul empire and the Portuguese voyages, the Venetians still maintained direct contact with the East. It has recently come to light that certain Venetians travelled overland into Asia; Nicolo di Conti, for instance, visited various places in the Bay of Bengal in the fourteen-forties, having safely travelled through the Moslem states by adjuring his faith. But, probably because of commercial rivalry, the experiences of such travellers were not much advertised, and did little to alter the prevailing ignorance concerning Asia.

<sup>3</sup> Silk was first brought to Europe overland from China in the time of the Roman Empire; at the same period spices, perfumes and precious stones came regularly from India and the East Indies by land and sea. The Romans had direct commerce with the East, their ships using the Red Sea route to the Indian Ocean and China. The use of the overland routes ended with the Parthian campaigns, and after the fall of the Roman Empire the sea-routes were exclusively in the hands of the Arabs.



diamonds that married and multiplied and fed on the "dew of heaven"; of a great river flowing out of Paradise—situated in accordance with tradition somewhere in the East—consisting of precious stones instead of water; of the palace of the legendary emperor Prester John, which was surmounted by golden domes set with huge carbuncles that shone brilliantly by night; of the Emperor of Cathay, whose pleasure it was to watch golden peacocks and enamel birds dancing and singing and clapping their wings.

It was therefore natural that when towards the end of the fifteenth century navigation became sufficiently developed for long voyages to be successfully undertaken, every effort should have been directed to finding a sea-route to this miraculous orient. The discoveries of the great age of discovery were accidental; the object of the early navigators was not to find new lands, but to reach the ancient sources of wealth. In 1487 the Portuguese, Bartholomew Diaz, found his way into the Indian Ocean by sailing round Africa; five years later Columbus, on behalf of Spain, set out to reach the orient by sailing across the Atlantic. America, which he thought to be part of Asia, was an unexpected discovery, and at first the Spaniards were less interested in exploiting it than in finding a way through it and round it. This they achieved in 1520, when Magellan<sup>1</sup>, sailing through the straits that bear his name, crossed the Pacific and showed that the Spice Islands—the Moluccas—could be reached from the west.

Thenceforth, the products of Asia poured into Europe from east and west. Magellan's route round the tip of South America proved too dangerous to be used for trade; but until the early nineteenth century a treasure galleon sailed yearly between Mexico and Manila, a tempting prize for roving seamen, carrying silver from Spanish America, and bringing back rich oriental cargoes, part of which was carried across Panama and so shipped back to Europe.

Inevitably Spain and Portugal disputed the possession of the wealthy eastern archipelagoes; in the end Spain withdrew from the Moluccas, while retaining the Philippines. In the days of their bitterest imperialist rivalry<sup>2</sup> Spain and Portugal were however agreed upon one point: no other nation should share their colossal spoils. After the discovery of America their respective rights had been defined by the Treaty of Tordesillas,<sup>3</sup> by which they had accepted a line drawn from Arctic to Antarctic three hundred and seventy leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands as the

<sup>1</sup> Magellan was killed in the Philippines in a fight with the Islanders, but his survivors completed the voyage.

<sup>2</sup> Imperial rivalry ended in 1580, when Portugal came under Spanish rule—which lasted until 1640.

<sup>3</sup> In 1494. This treaty modified the delimitation authorised by Pope Alexander VI in 1493

frontier between their two empires. They had thus appropriated to themselves not only the rich East, but the whole world outside Europe.

These outrageous claims were challenged by the other seafaring nations, England, Holland and France, as soon as they felt their maritime strength and their geographical information to be adequate. It was the policy of Spain and Portugal to conceal all information relating to their lucrative discoveries, as though the knowledge of oceans and continents could be kept as their exclusive national property. Geography had then acquired a status similar to that formerly held by alchemy; the most important of sciences, the means of acquiring wealth and power, its secrets were jealously guarded. Trade with remote nations, rather than the quest for the philosopher's stone, was the passion of the ambitious; the cosmographer was surrounded by the mystery and glamour that had once belonged only to alchemists, occultists and astrologers. In Spain and Portugal it was so much feared that geographical secrets might leak into the rest of Europe that the public was, as far as possible, kept in ignorance of them. Only selected persons were permitted to draw maps and charts, documents with a value comparable with that which today attaches to blue-prints of secret weapons.

Robert Thorne, an English merchant who had lived many years in Seville, writing in 1527 to the English ambassador to the court of Charles V, reports on the "new trade of Spicerie" in the manner of a spy.<sup>1</sup> Enclosing a map, which he had drawn himself from information surreptitiously gleaned, he begs the ambassador to conceal it, for should it be seen by anyone at court, the consequences to himself might well be serious. Only by the most roundabout methods could such knowledge be accumulated; he and his partner, he explains, had invested money in a recent Spanish trading venture to the orient, not so much for the sake of any financial profit, as for the right of sending a couple of Englishmen on the voyage. These two, unknown of course to the Spaniards, were "somewhat skilled in cosmography," and it was hoped that besides making their own valuable observations they might be able to procure or copy charts used by seamen native to the East. Thus by stealth and subterfuge, this shrewd patriot was gradually securing for England and himself the world's most profitable secrets.

It was the unfortunate truth that while Spain and Portugal had been dividing the world between them, England had made no attempt to participate in the new overseas trade. The Spaniards now held colonies in the West Indies, Panama, Mexico and Peru, and had laid claim to the Philippines; the Portuguese, besides their colonies in Madeira,

<sup>1</sup> *The book made by the right worshipful M. Robert Thorne in the yeere 1527 in Spail, to Doctour Ley, Lord ambassadour for King Henry the eight, to Charles the emperour, being an information of the parts of the world, discovered by him and the King of Portugal: and also of the way to the Moluccaes by North. (Hakluyt's Principal Navigations.)*

the Azores and Brazil, possessed a huge empire dispersed in settlements and trading posts on the coasts of West and East Africa, Persia, India, and the East Indies, and had even opened trade with China.<sup>1</sup> Against this the English could boast of nothing except a vague claim to Newfoundland, which John Cabot, commanding English ships, was said to have visited in 1497 and 1498. These somewhat obscure voyages, sponsored by Henry VII, were so far England's only overseas adventures.<sup>2</sup>

While Robert Thorne considered that England should somehow grab a share in the trade with India and the Spice Islands, he did not advocate contesting the use of the Cape route to the Indian Ocean. His proposal was no less than that England should discover her own exclusive routes to the East by way of the North Pole. Apparently it did not occur to him that any formidable difficulties would be encountered: on the contrary, he argued that these routes would be exceptionally convenient. The sea passage that was presumed to exist along the north of Asia would lead straight to Cathay, which had always been regarded as the richest empire of the East, and had so far not been exploited by either Spain or Portugal, while the North-west Passage to the Pacific would lead round the "back side" of Newfoundland, a land which England had already claimed. England had a right, Thorne suggested in his famous "declaration" to Henry VIII,<sup>3</sup> to occupy the northern part of the world, both on account of her geographical position and of the one discovery she had already made. Moreover it was reported that in the northern seas was "perpetual clearness of day without any darkness of night," which, obviously, would be "a great commodity to navigants." As for the theory that these seas were frozen, and so cold as to be uninhabitable, that could be dismissed as a legend. Had it not formerly been thought that south of the equator the world was too hot for human habitation? Yet it had been proved that no region was more "temperate"; from which Thorne splendidly concludes: "So I judge, there is no land uninhabitable, nor sea unnavigable." It was in this mood of magnificent arrogant ignorance that the English set out to seize their share of the world.

In 1553, in the reign of Edward VI, twenty-six years after Thorne had outlined his scheme, three ships left London to sail to the East by the north of Asia. Nothing was known of the great tract of the

<sup>1</sup> The most important Portuguese possessions in the East were Hormuz, an island commanding the Persian Gulf; Goa, on the west coast of India; and Malacca. The Portuguese reached China about 1514: they were allowed to establish a trading station on Macao at some date between 1552 and 1560.

<sup>2</sup> See America.

<sup>3</sup> *A declaration of the Indies and lands discovered, and subdued unto the Emperour and the King of Portugal: And also of other parts of the Indies and rich countries to be discovered, which the worshipful M. Robert Thorne merchant of London (who dwelt long in the city of Sivill in Spaine) exhorted King Henrie the eight to take in hand, p 527. (Hakluyt's Principal Navigations.)*

world which was to be crossed for the first time except that it was exceedingly cold, but with an optimism characteristic of the period, this fact was welcomed rather than feared. Muscovy, which was known to lie on the way, was just the place, so the London merchants argued, in which to sell warm English cloth,<sup>1</sup> and a similar market would no doubt be found in distant Cathay, which was also thought to have a cold climate. By such trade money could be made during the voyage with which to buy spices and jewels in the Spice Islands. Thus with pathetic lack of information and experience this first of England's great trading expeditions undertook one of the hardest journeys in the world, a journey which, baffling the boldest explorers, was not to be accomplished until more than three hundred years later.<sup>2</sup> But then Englishmen of the sixteenth century had an altogether irrational faith in the North-west and North-east Passages. Their zeal for riches and luxury was wasted grandly and madly in the sterile Arctic seas; only after repeated failures did they come to understand that they could pursue their aims with much less danger and difficulty by challenging the Spanish and the Portuguese in more tolerable climates.

Although this first expedition, according to modern standards, might seem to have been embarked upon with almost frivolous optimism, the contemporary account of Clement Adams<sup>3</sup> shows that it was regarded as a matter of the utmost gravity by everyone concerned. From the beginning it was realised that this was an enterprise affecting the history of the nation and the world, one that demanded the deliberation of the best brains available. A company of Merchant Adventurers was formed, of "certain grave and wise persons," who "should lay their heads together and give their judgements." Sebastian Cabot, a famous navigator, son of the John Cabot who had commanded the earlier English voyages to America, was most appropriately called upon for advice: "And whereas at the same time one Sebastian Cabot, a man in these days very renowned, happened to be in London, they began first of all to deal and consult diligently with him, and after much speech and conference together, it was at last concluded that three ships should be prepared and furnished out, for the search and discovery of the northern part of the world, to open a passage to our men for travail to new and unknown kingdoms."

<sup>1</sup> Little, however, was known of Muscovy. The backers of the expedition tried to obtain information from a couple of "Tatars" employed in the King's stable, but according to Clement Adams they "were able to answer nothing to purpose: being indeed more acquainted (as one there merrily and openly said) to toss pots, than to learn the states and dispositions of people."

<sup>2</sup> By the Swedish explorer Nordenskiöld in 1879.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Eden, in his *Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India*, published 1555 (see America), states that Clement Adams wrote his account in Latin "as he received it at the mouth of the said Richard Chancellor." It was published in English in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*.



In the equipping of these ships, a degree of foresight was exercised quite unusual for the sixteenth century, when explorers frequently set out with unseaworthy vessels and insufficient supplies. The ships were not new, but it was prudently decided that they should be largely rebuilt, and as a protection against a type of worm known to breed in certain foreign seas and to eat through the strongest oak, the keels were covered with thin sheets of lead, "an excellent and ingenious invention." Food for eighteen months was provided, in case the passage of "that huge and cold part of the world" should take as long as six months, and "the extremity of winter" should make it necessary to spend six months at the other end before the return journey could be begun.

For the success of such a journey not only courage, but discipline was needed. Sebastian Cabot,<sup>1</sup> in his Ordinances for the voyage, stressed the importance of loyalty and obedience to superiors, which, as he sensibly points out, should be practised "not only for duty and conscience sake towards God, . . . but also for prudent and worldly policy and public weal." In the interests of trade, barbarous foreigners were at all costs to be conciliated, so that it might be possible to ascertain their "natures and conditions," the products of their countries, and their needs. The best way, Cabot suggested, of gaining their confidence, was to "allure" them on board the ships, and then disarm them by presents of fine clothes, friendly entertainment and strong drinks: "and if the person taken may be made drunk with your beer and wine, you shall know the secrets of his heart." If any inhabitants of these unknown lands were suspected of gathering gold, the mariners should stop at nothing to please them: for, as in all expeditions of the period, the hope was entertained that fabulous deposits of precious metals might be discovered:

"28 Item if people appear gathering of stones, gold, metal, or other like, on the sand, your pinnaces may draw nigh, marking what things they gather, using or playing upon the drum, or such other instruments, as may allure them to hearkening, to fantasy, or desire to see, and hear your instruments and voices, but keep you out of danger, and shew to them no point or sign of rigour and hostility."

Obviously much would depend on the captain, who had to perform the functions of explorer, merchant, ambassador, and at times, it seems, entertainer. It was not however necessary that he should be an expert seaman. At this period the captain of a ship or of an expedition was the supreme commander, responsible for all important decisions; the navigation was usually entrusted to a master or pilot. In choosing a captain for this voyage, the Merchant Adventurers therefore looked not so much for any specialised skill as for the qualities of leadership, the character

<sup>1</sup> He had been made life governor of the Company of the Merchant Adventurers.

and presence calculated to gain the respect of savages, enemies, and the disorderly English mariners. Sir Hugh Willoughby, who was appointed to this post, recommended himself, we learn, "both by reason of his goodly personage (for he was of tall stature) as also for his singular skill in the services of war." Richard Chancellor, second in command and captain of another ship, was "pilot major of the voyage." This Chancellor was then an obscure young man living under the protection of Master Henry Sidney, father of Sir Philip Sidney and a favourite of Edward VI, who introduced him to the Merchant Adventurers with the eloquent reminder :

"We commit a little money to the chance and hazard of fortune : He commits his life (a thing to a man of all things most dear) to the raging sea, and uncertainties of many dangers. We shall here live and rest at home quietly with our friends, and acquaintances : but he in the mean time labouring to keep the ignorant and unruly mariners in good order and obedience, with how many cares shall he trouble and vex himself ? with how many troubles shall he break himself ? and how many disquietings shall he be forced to sustain ? We shall keep our own coasts and country : He shall seek strange and unknown kingdoms. He shall commit his safety to barbarous and cruel people, and shall hazard his life amongst the monstrous and terrible beasts of the sea."

He was to meet these trials with the fortitude that was expected of him. Indeed it seems that the Merchant Adventurers really made a selection befitting their gravity and wisdom, and that both Willoughby and Chancellor were men of exceptional quality. Tragedy, endured with dignity, was to mark this voyage, but none of the sordid brawls and mutinies and intrigues which blighted so many of the enterprises of the sixteenth century.

*The newe Navigation and discoverie of the kingdom of Muscovia, by the Northeast, in the yeere 1553 : Enterprised by Sir Hugh Willoughbie knight, and perfourmed by Richard Chancelor Pilot major of the voyage : written in Latin by Clement Adams.*

At last this expedition, the product of so much care, forethought, diligence and resolution, set sail, far too late in the year, from London. The court, the privy council, and the common people flocked to see the departure of the ships on this historic occasion, which Clement Adams has described in one of the noblest passages in all English travel literature :

"They having saluted their acquaintance, one his wife, another his children, another his kinsfolks, and another his friends dearer than his

kinsfolks, were present and ready at the day appointed : and having weighed anchor, they departed with the turning of the water, and sailing easily, came first to Greenwich. The greater ships are towed down with boats, and oars, and the mariners being all apparelled in watchet or sky coloured cloth, rowed amain, and made way with diligence. And being come near to Greenwich (where the court then lay), presently upon the news thereof, the courtiers came running out, and the common people flocked together, standing very thick upon the shore : the privy council, they looked out at the windows of the court, and the rest ran up to the tops of the towers : the ships here-upon discharge their ordinance, and shoot off their pieces after the manner of war, and of the sea, insomuch that the tops of the hills sounded therewith, the valleys and the waters gave an echo, and the mariners, they shouted in such sort that the sky rang again with the noise thereof. One stood in the poop of the ship, and by his gesture bids farewell to his friends in the best manner he could. Another walks upon the hatches, another climbs the shrouds, another stands upon the main yard, and another in the top of the ship. To be short, it was a very triumph (after a sort), in all respects to the beholders."

The expedition was handicapped from the start by the errors and accidents common to nearly all the voyages of the period. The preparations had taken so long that the ships had not left until May, far too late in the year for an Arctic voyage ; at Harwich more valuable time was lost waiting for a favourable wind. Meanwhile Chancellor was already worrying about provisions, having discovered that in spite of all the care, time and money expended, much of the food was "corrupted and putrified," and the hogsheads of wine were leaking. These were the usual trials of the early English navigators, who allowed themselves to depend on their often dishonest contractors. The purchase and storage of provisions were never sufficiently supervised ; Cook, in the late eighteenth century, seems to have been the first commander to have given his personal attention to these vital matters.

It was the middle of June before the ships finally set sail, and the men "committed themselves to the sea, giving last adieu to their native country, which they knew not whether they should ever return to see again or not. Many of them looked oftentimes back, and could not refrain from tears, considering into what hazards they were to fall, and what uncertainties of the sea they were to make trial of."

The heavy premonitions which seem to have haunted everyone connected with this expedition were to be amply fulfilled. "Flaws of wind and terrible whirlwinds" were encountered off the coast of Norway ; in a night of thick fog and violent storm Chancellor's ship, the "Edward Bonaventure," was separated from the rest. Sir Hugh

Willoughby continued the voyage with the two remaining ships as far as Lapland, where in view of the bad weather and the lateness of the year—it was already September—he decided to spend the winter. On this brutal uninhabited coast he and all his men died of cold; but the ships were recovered in the course of a later voyage, and at the same time his journal, with the last entry, a dignified acceptance of defeat, written in his own hand :<sup>1</sup>

“ Thus remaining in this haven the space of a week, seeing the year far spent, and also very evil weather, as frost, snow, and hail, as though it had been the deep of winter, we thought best to winter there. Wherefore we sent out three men southsouthwest, to search if they could find people, who went three days journey, but could find none : after that, we sent other three westward four days journey, which also returned without finding any people. Then we sent three men southeast three days journey, who in like sort returned without finding of people, of any similitude of habitation.”

Meanwhile Chancellor had sailed to Wardhouse (Vardö), where it had been agreed that the ships should meet if for any reason they became separated, and after waiting in vain for a week he had decided, in spite of the warnings from certain Scots whom he found there, to go forward alone. Passing through the region of the midnight sun he came at last into a “ great bay ”—the White Sea, where by his gentle and courteous behaviour he won the friendship of the primitive inhabitants :

“ Now Richard Chancellor with his ship and company being thus left alone, and become very pensive, heavy and sorrowful, by this dispersion of the fleet, he (according to the order before taken), shapeth his course for Wardhouse in Norway, there to expect and abide the arrival of the rest of the ships. And being come thither, and having stayed there the space of seven days, and looked in vain for their coming, he determined at length to proceed alone in the purposed voyage. And as he was preparing himself to depart, it happened that he fell in company and speech with certain Scottishmen : who having understanding of his intention, and wishing well to his actions, began earnestly to dissuade him from the further prosecution of the discovery, by amplifying the dangers which he was to fall into, and omitted no reason that might serve to that purpose. But he holding nothing so ignominious and reproachful, as inconstancy and levity of mind, and persuading himself that a man of valour could not commit a more dishonourable part than for fear of danger to avoid and shun great attempts, was nothing at all changed or discouraged with the speeches

<sup>1</sup> Published in *Hakluyt's Principal Navigations*.



and words of the Scots, remaining steadfast and immutable in his first resolution : determining either to bring that to pass which was intended, or else to die the death. . . .

"To conclude, when they saw their desire and hope of the arrival of the rest of the ships to be every day more and more frustrated, they provided to sea again, and Master Chancellor held on his course towards that unknown part of the world, and sailed so far, that he came at last to the place where he found no night at all, but a continual light and brightness of the sun shining clearly upon the huge and mighty sea. And having the benefit of this perpetual light for certain days, at the length it pleased God to bring them into a certain great bay, which was one of hundred miles or thereabout over. Whereinto they entered, and somewhat far within it cast anchor, and looking every way about them, it happened that they espied afar off a certain fisher boat, which Master Chancellor, accompanied with a few of his men, went towards to common with the fishermen that were in it, and to know of them what country it was, and what people, and of what manner of living they were : but they being amazed with the strange greatness of his ship (for in those parts before that time they had never seen the like), began presently to avoid and to flee : but he still following them at last overtook them, and being come to them, they (being in great fear, as men half dead) prostrated themselves before him, offering to kiss his feet : but he (according to his great and singular courtesy), looked pleasantly upon them, comforting them by signs and gestures, refusing these duties and reverences of theirs, and taking them up in all loving sort from the ground. And it is strange to consider how much favour afterwards in that place, this humanity of his did purchase to himself. For they being dismissed spread by and by a report abroad of the arrival of a strange nation, of a singular gentleness and courtesy : whereupon the common people came together offering to these new-come guests victuals freely, and not refusing to traffic with them, except they had been bound by a certain religious use and custom, not to buy any foreign commodities, without the knowledge and consent of the king."

Reading these splendid pages of Clement Adams, it is a shock when one remembers that the purpose of all this courage, humanity and endurance was trade and only trade. But then the pioneers of English commerce had need of heroic qualities ; such men as Richard Chancellor, Anthony Jenkinson who attempted to cross Central Asia, Sir James Lancaster who was the first to sail to the East Indies, could have achieved nothing had they not been brave, prudent, just, and, above all, inspiring leaders. It is easy to idealise the sixteenth-century quest for wealth ; the men who took part in it were often noble figures, and

the impulse behind them—the desire of the inhabitants of a small cold rustic island for fine stuffs and jewels and foods and perfumes, in short : for elegance, for beauty—seems not unworthy. It is disconcerting to remember that these high intentions and endeavours were to benefit so few ; that while the monopoly chartered companies reaped enormous profits, the poor in England and in Asia remained as poor as ever, that England's expansion into the East, the realisation of an ancient glorious dream, could be accomplished only at the cost of a sequence of wars, annexations, threats and exactions, with results from which the world is still suffering today.

Chancellor's humanity procured him every satisfaction from the " barbarous Russes." He was sent to Moscow where he was well received by the Tsar Ivan the Terrible, who entertained him to a banquet of roast swan and finally dismissed him with letters to Edward VI inviting the English to visit Russia and trade there freely. On his return to England, Queen Mary, who had succeeded Edward VI, at once granted a charter to the Company of the Merchant Adventurers, which became thenceforth the Muscovy Company, and, like the Levant Company which was formed some twenty-five years later, was to enjoy a prosperous existence until the eighteenth century. Thus this first blind venture into Asia brought about happy and lasting results. England's relations with Russia, unlike her relations with certain oriental nations, remained peaceful and profitable ; the Muscovy Company was able to sell shipments of cloth, pewter and tin at double cost price, while Ivan the Terrible found consolation in a frustrated and ferocious old age by making offers of marriage to his " loving sister " Queen Elizabeth.

In 1555 Chancellor was again despatched to Russia, accompanied by two agents of the newly formed company. Satisfactory trading arrangements were negotiated with the Tsar, and in the following year Chancellor set sail for England with Osep Napea, the first Russian ambassador to the English court. But terrible weather was encountered on this voyage. Two of the four ships were lost ; and that which carried Chancellor and the ambassador was wrecked off the coast of Scotland, where a number of English and Russians were drowned. The ambassador somehow escaped, but Chancellor died gallantly while endeavouring to bring the ambassador and his suite to shore.

Meanwhile the object of travelling to the East : to discover a route to Cathay and the Spice Islands, was by no means forgotten. To have found Russia and established a valuable new trade was regarded as a lucky incident, a deviation which could never be allowed to interfere with the original grand scheme. As soon as 1556, while Chancellor was negotiating in Moscow, another expedition was sent to sail round the north of Asia ;

it was commanded by Steven Burrough, who had been master of Chancellor's ship in the first voyage. Burrough succeeded in reaching the island of Vaigach, near Novaya Zemlya, before the darkness and storms of the Arctic winter forced him to turn back; a remarkable achievement, for although he had barely crossed a quarter of the enormous distance between Norway and the Bering Straits, none of the various navigators who subsequently attempted this voyage penetrated any considerable distance further east until the nineteenth century.

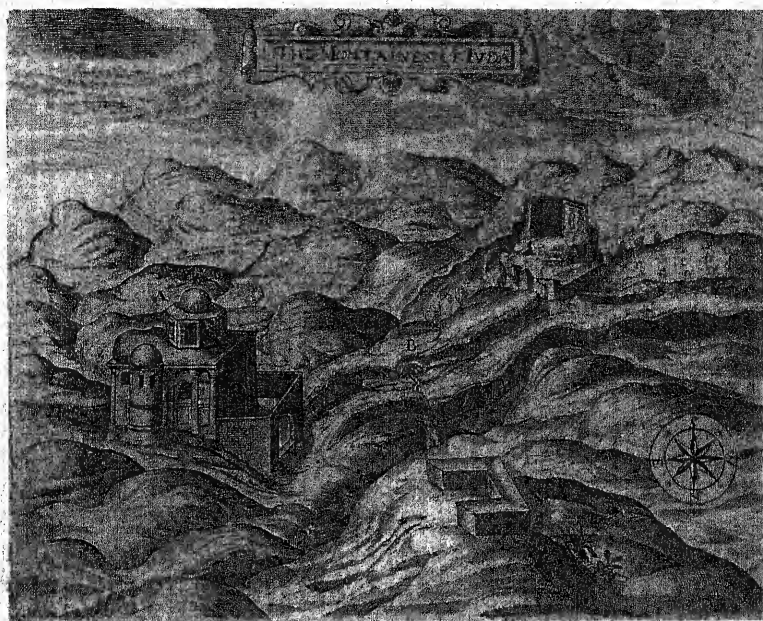
When Anthony Jenkinson, Captain-General of the Muscovy Company, conducted the ambassador Osep Napea back to Russia in 1557 he had instructions to combine this journey with yet another exploring expedition. After escorting the ambassador to Moscow, he was to make a new attempt to reach Cathay, not by the North-east Passage, but overland across Central Asia.

Although Jenkinson, inevitably, had but a hazy and optimistic conception of what lay ahead, he was as well fitted for this impracticable undertaking as anyone who could have been found at the time. An eminent traveller, he had already spent many years wandering in the dangerous Moslem states of the Levant. There he must have learnt the art of diplomacy, which was then as necessary to a traveller as courage or endurance, for it is recorded that he once obtained from the imperious Sultan Solieman the Magnificent the extraordinary privilege of a licence to trade in Turkish ports.<sup>1</sup> No doubt it was this experience that enabled him to handle so successfully the equally autocratic Ivan the Terrible. While he was in Moscow, with remarkable address he induced the Tsar to entrust him with letters to various princes living beyond the eastern shores of the Caspian, so that he could travel as his representative. This, as he rightly judged, would give him prestige in those wild remote countries where no one was likely to appreciate the status of an English merchant.

*The voyage of M. Anthony Jenkinson, made from the citie of Mosco in Russia, to the citie of Boghar in Bactria, in the yere 1558 : written by himself to the Merchants of London of the Moscovie Company.*

Russia seemed a barbarous enough country to these first visitors from snug industrious Tudor England. Chancellor had complained of the "long and most troublesome" journeys by sledge, the "very extreme and horrible" cold; Jenkinson warned travellers that on the route from the coast to Moscow they should be prepared to spend many nights in the open wilderness, and should always carry their

<sup>1</sup> Jenkinson was in the Levant 1546-1553; permission for English subjects to trade in Turkish ports was obtained on behalf of Queen Elizabeth only in 1580. (See Turkey.)



The mountains of Judea



The cave of St. John the Baptist.  
From engravings in *George Sandys' Relation of a Journey Begun*  
An. Dom. 1610.



PLATE XIV



Shah Abbas.  
From a contemporary Persian miniature.  
*By courtesy of the British Museum.*

own provisions, with hatchets, tinder boxes, and kettles. Moscow was then a large city, perhaps larger than London, with a number of castles and churches, but in Chancellor's opinion it was "very rude," and built "without order"; while Jenkinson, accustomed though he must have been to the rude habits of English sailors, was shocked by the "drunken taverns of the city," and the sight of men who "drunk away their children and all their goods," and finally "impawned" themselves, being unable to pay. Even the Tsar's palace seemed to Chancellor a mean and old-fashioned structure, "very low built in eight square, much like the old building of England, with small windows, and so in other points." Only in the court apartments was there any show of luxury: in the council chamber, where the Tsar sat on a high gilt throne, crowned and robed in beaten gold, surrounded by a hundred courtiers also dressed in gold; and in the great dining hall, where a stupendous display of gold and silver plate overawed the many hundreds of visitors who attended the rich royal banquets.<sup>1</sup>

Jenkinson, leaving this oasis of barbaric pomp, was to enter the yet more bleak and brutish lands of southern Russia, the lands of the Tatar tribes, who had only recently submitted to the Tsar. Travelling down the Volga with his two English companions, Richard and Robert Johnson, and a Tatar interpreter, he attached himself, for safety, to the party of a distinguished Russian on his way to take up his post as governor of Astrakan, which had been conquered by the Tsar only six years before.

In the lower reaches of the river they passed through the country of the Nagai Tatars, a murderous and slippery people, whose very appearance, as they wandered over the plains like a moving town, seemed evil and unnatural:

"Departing from Perovolog, having the wilderness on both sides, we saw a great herd of Nagayans, pasturing, as is abovesaid, by estimation above a thousand camels drawing of carts with houses upon them like tents, of a strange fashion, seeming to be a far off a town: that horde was belonging to a great Murse<sup>1</sup> called Smillie, the greatest prince in all Nagay, who hath slain and driven away all the rest, not, sparing his own brethren and children."

Astrakan, squalid, stinking, ravaged by the plague and famine that inevitably followed war, seemed to Jenkinson a terrible place:

"The town of Astrakan is situated in an island upon a hillside, having a castle within the same, walled about with earth and timber,

<sup>1</sup> Such luxuries came from the Levant and Persia through the hands of the Tatars. The continual wars between the Russians and the Tatars did not prevent this commerce.

<sup>1</sup> Murse: Murza.

neither fair nor strong, the town is also walled about with earth : the buildings and houses (except it be the captain's lodging, and certain other gentlemen's) most base and simple. The island is most destitute and barren of wood and pasture, and the ground will bear no corn : the air is there most infected, by reason (as I suppose) of much fish, and specially sturgeon, by which only the inhabitants live, having great scarcity of flesh and bread. They hang up their fish in their streets and houses to dry for their provision, which causeth such abundance of flies to increase there, as the like was never seen in any land, to their great plague. And at my being at the said Astrakan, there was a great famine and plague among the people, and specially among the Tatars called Nagayans, who the same time came thither in great numbers to render themselves to the Russes their enemies, and to seek succour at their hands, their country being destroyed, as I said before : but they were by ill entertained or relieved, for there died a great number of them for hunger, which lay all the island through in heaps dead, and like to beasts, unburied, very pitiful to behold ; many of them were also sold by the Russes, and the rest were banished from the island. . . . At my being there I could have bought many goodly Tatars' children if I would have had a thousand, of their own fathers and mothers, to say, a boy or a wench for a loaf of bread worth six pence in England, but we had more need of victuals at that time than of any such merchandise."

The trials of the journey had only just begun, for here the authority of the Tsar ended, and the three Englishmen had to make their way through the wild hordes of Asia without protection. First they had to cross the Caspian, and they could find no way of doing this except by purchasing a ship, equipping her, engaging a crew of Tatars and Persians, and navigating her themselves—an extraordinary feat, for the voyage through this entirely unknown sea and the shoals and shallows of the Volga delta was an exceedingly dangerous one. After nearly a month, during which they were tormented by illness and storms, and threatened by a band of robbers who tried to board the ship while she lay at anchor near the coast, they landed on the eastern shore. Here, in spite of being "daily molested" by the "bad and brutish" local inhabitants, who were much given to stealing, fighting, begging and cheating, they managed to assemble a caravan of a thousand camels into Asia.

Their route led through the deserts and steppes of the Turkomans, an abominable people who lived by plunder, acknowledged no ruler, and even disregarded the ties of family and tribe. Jenkinson, with his two companions and his little band of followers, was of course quite powerless to defend himself by force ; guile and diplomacy were his only effective weapons. His policy was to ride fearlessly into the camps of

the local princes, demand protection and armed escorts, and exact reparations whenever his caravan, as several times happened, was robbed. But treachery was common, and early one morning, in the heart of the desert four weeks' journey east of the Caspian, his escort deserted after informing him that a band of robbers was approaching. In this crisis his own Tatar followers remained loyal; perhaps his strong and pleasing personality which had enabled him to gain favours from princes and monarchs had given him a certain control over them, for there seems no other explanation for their good behaviour. Jenkinson writes, for the period, very plainly, without any of the solemn exaltation that characterises Clement Adams and some other sixteenth-century travel writers, but it is impossible not to be impressed by his bald account of this extraordinary occasion when Christians and Mohammedans banded together, prayed, and defended themselves desperately against a superior enemy from morning until nightfall :

" But they being gone, certain Tatars of our company called holy men (because they had been at Mecha) caused the whole caravan to stay, and would make their prayers, and divine how we should prosper in our journey, and whether we should meet with any ill company or no, to which, our whole caravan did agree, and they took certain sheep and killed them, and took the blade bones of the same, and first sodde them,<sup>1</sup> and then burnt them, and took the blood of the said sheep, and mingled it with the powder of the said bones, and wrote certain characters with the said blood, using many other ceremonies and words, and by the same divined and found, that we should meet with enemies and thieves (to our great trouble) but should overcome them, to which sorcery, I and my company gave no credit, but we found it true : for within three hours after that the soldiers departed from us, which was the 15 day of December in the morning, we escried far off divers horsemen which made towards us, and we (perceiving them to be rovers) gathered ourselves together, being forty of us well appointed, and able to fight, and we made our prayers together every one after his law, professing to live and die one with another, and so prepared ourselves. When the thieves were nigh unto us, we perceived them to be in number thirty seven men well armed, and appointed with bows, arrows and swords, and the captain a prince banished from his country. They willed us to yield ourselves, or else to be slain, but we defied them, wherewith they shot at us all at once, and we at them very hotly, and so continued our fight from morning until two hours within night, divers men, horses and camels being wounded and slain on both parts : and had it not been for four hand guns which I and my company had and used, we had been overcome and

<sup>1</sup> sodde them : soaked them.



destroyed: for the thieves were better armed, and were also better archers than we; but after we had slain divers of their men and horses with our guns, they durst not approach so nigh, which caused them to come to a truce with us until the next morning, which we accepted, and encamped ourselves upon a hill, and made the fashion of a castle, walling it about with packs of wares, and laid our horses and camels within the same to save them from the shot of arrows: and the thieves also encamped within an arrow shot also of us, but they were betwixt us and the water, which was to our great discomfort, because neither we nor our camels had drunk in two days before."

The next day the robbers, somewhat intimidated, accepted a bribe to depart, and that evening the exhausted Englishmen brought their caravan to the banks of the Oxus:

" . . . where we refreshed ourselves, having been three days without water, and drink, and tarried there all the next day, making merry with our slain horses and camels."

At last, after eluding another party of plunderers, they came to the great and ancient city of Bokhara, the immemorial meeting place of caravans from Persia and the Levant, India and the Far East. But its grandeur had sadly dwindled since the days, three centuries earlier, when the Polo brothers had waited there three years before proceeding to Cathay. The Mongul empire had long since crumbled: wars, civil wars and the bands of thieves had wrecked commerce and closed completely the route to the East. It was several years, Jenkinson discovered, since anyone had dared attempt the nine months' journey to Cathay; the trade from India to Russia had been diverted to the sea route by the Portuguese; there was no local market for foreign goods, and the few merchants who frequented the place were "beggary and poor." There was nothing for him to do but to retrace his steps; and so after spending a few months resting and viewing relics of former luxury, the "temples and monuments of stone sumptuously builded and gilt," and the "bathstones so artificially built that the like thereof is not in the world," he set out for the Caspian, just in time to escape the army of the King of Samarkand which was marching to besiege the city.

In spite of the inevitable threats of robbery, hunger and thirst and shipwreck, Jenkinson successfully accomplished the return journey to Moscow, bringing with him six ambassadors sent by the Asiatic Khans to the court of the Tsar, and twenty-five Russians whose liberation from slavery he had obtained. This strange company he presented to Ivan the Terrible,<sup>1</sup> together with a Tatarian drum, and "a white cow's tail from Cathay," the only connecting link with that country

<sup>1</sup> In September 1559, after a journey of a year and five months.

which he had found in all his perilous journey, and which was actually the tail of a yak.

No further attempt was made to reach Cathay by the route across Central Asia, and when Jenkinson was next sent to Russia by the Muscovy Company his mission was to open trade with Persia by way of the Caspian. He was successful in reaching Kazvin and being received by Shah Tahmasp,<sup>1</sup> but the religious fanaticism of this ruler was such that the possibility of trading privileges, or indeed of any relations with England, could not even be discussed,<sup>2</sup> and Jenkinson counted himself lucky to escape with his life. Thenceforth he was employed as special envoy to settle the Company's various affairs in Russia, and to negotiate with the Tsar, a post for which his diplomatic skill well suited him.<sup>3</sup> Five more expeditions, however, were sent to Persia, but the pirates and storms of the Caspian, the continual wars between Persia and Turkey, and the anarchy that resulted, frustrated all attempts to open trade, and in 1581 the project was finally abandoned.

Much better success rewarded the Sherley brothers, Sir Anthony and Sir Robert, two spectacular adventurers who in the last year of the sixteenth century travelled to Persia across the Syrian desert, presented themselves to the great Shah Abbas, and so impressed him that he showered them with honours and luxuries and later sent them as his ambassadors to the courts of Europe.

Chancellor and Jenkinson, the pioneers of English travel to the East, had found not the anticipated wealth and splendour, but barbarism and beastliness. The crude pomp of Ivan the Terrible was but a glittering speck in the vast cold wilderness of Russia; Jenkinson, with his experience of Tatar hordes, rotting corpses, robbers, deserts and ruined towns, had seen the formidability but not the magnificence of Asia. But Sir Anthony and Sir Robert, who also passed through many hardships, succeeded in penetrating to that oriental world which had always been rumoured, imagined and reported in the West: the world of dazzling despots, jewelled palaces, tremendous bloody wars, and the voluptuous joys of feasting and women and dancing and music and song.

Sir Anthony Sherley<sup>4</sup> was one of the most glamorous and unprincipled

<sup>1</sup> In 1562.

<sup>2</sup> Persia was Mohammedan, but adhered to the "Shiah" or "Separatist" doctrine, which had been adopted by the Safavi Dynasty (1499-1736).

<sup>3</sup> Jenkinson died in 1611. The only official recognition he received seems absurdly inadequate: in 1568-9 he was granted—not even a knighthood—but a coat of arms. The preamble to the patent, however, pays belated tribute to his services, for he is described as "one who for the service of his prince, weal of his country, and for knowledge sake, hath not feared to adventure and hazard his life, and to wear his body with long and painful travel into divers and sundry countries."

<sup>4</sup> Sir Anthony Sherley or Shirley (1565-1635?).

figures of his age. That he should have spent his life in the thrilling pursuit of riches and glory was normal; but unlike most of his contemporaries, including such exuberant individualists as Raleigh, Essex, Buckingham, or Captain John Smith, he never submitted to the excuse and discipline of loyalty to his country. Sir Anthony was loyal to himself alone; his ideal was his own success. Before he rose to fame in the court of Shah Abbas he had already received the Order of St. Michael from Henry IV of France in recognition of his valour in the French Wars of Religion, to the indignation of Queen Elizabeth, who compared his behaviour to that of a faithless wife, and remarked: "I will not have my sheep marked with a strange brand; nor suffer them to follow the pipe of a strange shepherd." But Sir Anthony, after a sensational career as Persian ambassador to the courts of Europe, was to end his days as Earl of the Sacred Roman Empire, living on a pension from the King of Spain.

It was in Venice in 1599 that he conceived the idea of offering his services to the Shah of Persia. Up till then, in spite of his indiscretion in accepting a title from Henry IV, his exploits had been those proper to an Elizabethan Englishman. No doubt the fact that he was a Roman Catholic had made it necessary for him to seek distinction abroad. After fighting in the Low Countries and in France, he had sailed the Atlantic in command of a privateering expedition against the Portuguese; on his return, his friend and protector Essex had sent him with a small following to help Cesare D'Este defend his principality of Ferrara against the Papal States.

But Cesare D'Este had submitted before they arrived, and it was then that Sir Anthony decided to go to Persia. The object of the journey was, of course, his own advancement: if he could evade murder and execution and please Shah Abbas, he might well make his fortune in that rich oriental court where there were no other Englishmen to compete with, no hard-headed merchants milking the country's wealth. But some cover for his intentions was desirable, and so he announced that his purpose was to induce the King of Persia to unite with the Christian princes in a war against the Turks. This was a bold inspiring scheme, sanctified by religion, and well calculated to gain the support of his twenty-five followers; it was also directly opposed to the interests and policy of Queen Elizabeth, who had recently secured profitable trading privileges in Turkey and wanted the Sultan as an ally against Spain. As an additional bait, he held out the ever-appealing prospect of establishing trade with the East, and was thus able to obtain useful letters of recommendation to the English merchants of the Levant Company of Aleppo. His private ambitions, as he rather naïvely admits in his *Relation* of his travels,<sup>1</sup> he thought it best

<sup>1</sup> A rather pompous narrative, less interesting than that of Mr. Manwaring.

to keep to himself—" as fearing the strange humour of the world rather inclined to mis-judge of all actions, than to give them only a charitable construction "; . . .

Sir Anthony had all the qualifications necessary to a successful international adventurer. His personality, at once domineering and seductive, not only commanded the absolute fidelity of his followers, but often attracted complete strangers to come to his aid. He had a genius for bluff: his arrogant gestures and speeches cowed enemies before whom he was actually powerless; his bearing was always superb, and however precarious his circumstances he could put up an appearance such as impressed royalty. Moreover he emanated an aura of honour and virtue: everything he did seemed noble. No doubt he was as convinced of this as were his followers, like certain modern magnates who see themselves as benefactors of the human race. George Manwaring, who accompanied him on his travels, constantly refers to his "gallant mind," "gallant spirit," and "princely mind"; and indeed, when reading his journal, it is impossible not to be infected by his enthusiasm for "so worthy a leader."

*A True Discourse of Sir Anthony Sherley's Travel into Persia, what accidents did happen in the way, both going thither and returning backe with the business he was employed in from the Sophi: written by George Manwaring, Gent. who attended on Sir Anthony all the Journey.*

The party with which Sir Anthony left Venice in an argosy bound for Scanderoon consisted of his younger brother Sir Robert, some twenty-five followers, mostly gentlemen who had come with him from England, and Angelo, one of those invaluable strangers who had a way of attaching themselves to Sir Anthony, a Turkish traveller, turned Christian, who knew Persia and spoke twenty-four languages.

The "accidents" began almost immediately, for Sir Anthony was one of those men who love to invite danger for the pleasure of overcoming it. Before Zante had been reached he had ordered "one of his meanest sort of men" to bastinado a passenger who was heard to speak disrespectfully of the English Queen, a display of patriotism which, while no doubt adding to his reputation of being a man not to be trifled with, nearly brought about disaster. Passengers and crew, numbering fifty-two, rose in arms against the twenty-five Englishmen, and it was only through the lucky intervention of some Armenian merchants that they were left stranded on Zante instead of being murdered outright.

They were forced to continue their journey, with many delays, sailing from island to island in small ships, until they finally landed at



the mouth of the Orontes. Here their troubles began again, for like all Christian travellers in Syria, they were daily insulted, bullied and cheated by the Turks. There was a brawl as soon as they landed and the usual extortions during their caravan journey inland; even the protection of the English merchants at Aleppo was insufficient to save them from grotesque humiliations. Poor Mr. Manwaring only had to walk out in the town alone to be seized by a Turk, who, so he complains: "took me fast by one of the ears with his hand, and so did lead me up and down the streets; and if I did chance to look sour upon him, he would give me such a ring, that I did verily think he would have pulled off my ear, and this he continued with me for the space of one hour, with much company following me, some throwing stones at me, and some spitting on me"; . . .

Meanwhile Sir Anthony prepared himself for his coming venture by purchasing merchandise and suitable presents for the King of Persia. In his usual grand manner he spared no expense; the merchandise was cloth of gold, the gifts consisted of "jewels of great worth" and twelve emerald cups. He must have sunk all his resources in this magnificent equipment—a daring gamble, seeing that before he could attempt to impress the King of Persia he had to make a long journey through wild, hostile territories swarming with robbers.

As far as Baghdad, then known as Babylon, the Englishmen were able to travel with a Turkish Cadi, an ambassador from the Sultan to the Viceroy of Baghdad. A four days' journey through the desert brought them, without incident, to the banks of "the famous river Euphrates." Here they embarked in boats and sailed downstream through a savage, sinister, ruinous, menacing country:

"We did commonly see, every morning, great lions come down to the river side to drink; and the wild Arabians would follow us most part of the day, on the top of the hills by the river side, to the number sometimes of one hundred, and sometimes two hundred, with slings, slinging stones at us; but they did small hurt unto us, in regard of our shot, although it was some trouble to us. So, passing along the river we came to a town called Anna, which was governed by the Turks, but inhabited by many Arabians; and about two miles from the town, by the river side, the King of Arabia had pitched his tents; for, as we were told, he had made a vow never to come into house, till he could conquer all his country from the Turks."

Here once again the Englishmen narrowly escaped being massacred. A Turk on the boat accidentally fired a shot which killed one of the King's guards, whereupon the Arabs "ran fiercely on him, and cut him in a hundred pieces, taking the pieces and throwing them up and down." The Englishmen might well have been handled in the same way had

not Sir Anthony boldly presented himself to the Arabian King—a man “exceeding black and very grim of visage”—explained his intention of going to Persia and forming a league to destroy the Turks, and pleased him so well that he was given a fine banquet, and a passport for safe conduct which proved of the greatest assistance during the rest of the journey to Baghdad.

It is even more to his credit that he succeeded in making an ally of the Turkish Cadi. As they approached Baghdad the Cadi warned him that his possessions were likely to be searched and confiscated, and advised him to place them in his hands until he should leave the city. Fortunately Sir Anthony had enough confidence in the man to entrust him with some of his valuables, not, however, daring to include the desirable emerald cups. As predicted, on reaching the city he was searched; everything was taken from him, and but for the goods that the Cadi returned to him with scrupulous honesty, the Englishmen, in the words of Manwaring “had been left naked to the world.”

Sir Anthony never saw his other possessions again; they were delivered to the Viceroy, who sent for Sir Anthony and declared that he had taken such a fancy to the emerald cups that he intended to keep them for his own use, without payment. Sir Anthony retaliated with the regal contempt which he always displayed when trapped in a weak position:

“ . . . but Sir Anthony carrying a gallant mind, as he ever did, would not do any obedience unto him; for at the entrance into his presence, being bravely attended upon with noblemen, Sir Anthony came boldly in, and did not so much as once bow himself; but did sit down by him without any entreating. Whereupon the Viceroy, looking very grim upon him, told him he should be sent in chains to Constantinople to the Great Turk; and all his company should have their heads cut off, and set upon the gates of Babylon. ‘Then,’ replied Sir Anthony, ‘that as for his own life he did not respect it, but for his followers’; and he desired to endure any torments himself, so that his company might pass quietly without hurt; so that, for the time, he let him depart for his lodging.”

But these grand words neither brought back Sir Anthony's emerald cups, nor removed suspicion from him and his followers. Stranded in this remote Turkish city, spied upon and threatened by the authorities, deprived of the means either to get away or to keep up the appearance on which his success depended, he might have suffered a painful, or, worse still, an obscure fate, but for an event so fantastic that it seems to belong to a fairy tale. A Florentine merchant who had travelled with his party from Aleppo invited him to a secret meeting. When Sir Anthony arrived at the appointed place, he was shown into

a tent, where the Florentine, "opening his gown," handed him a bag of gold coins with the following astounding speech: "The God of Heaven bless you, and your whole company, and your enterprise, which I will no farther desire to know, than in my hope, which persuadeth me that it is good; myself I am going to China, whence, if I return, I shall little need the repayment of this courtesy, which I have done you with a most free heart; if I die by the way, I shall still less need it: but if it please God so to direct both our safeties with good providence, that we may meet again, I assure myself, that you will remember me to be your friend; which is enough, for all that I can say to a man of your sort."<sup>1</sup> And before Sir Anthony even had time to thank him, he went away.

The Florentine, as Sir Anthony heard later, got into considerable trouble on his account; but his gift of money enabled the Englishmen not only to live in comfort until they were taken up by the King of Persia, but to buy themselves "rich apparel," fit for any court, and to "spend extraordinarily in gifts."

The Englishmen left Babylon secretly, in the caravan of some Persian merchants. They were six miles from the city when a present arrived for Sir Anthony: "a very gallant Arabian horse with a velvet saddle"; this had been sent by an Armenian, an attendant of the Viceroy, who was yet another of the strangers to fall under the spell of this irresistible adventurer. When the Viceroy had discovered Sir Anthony's departure he had sent an expedition of two hundred horsemen to bring him back, but this Armenian had been able to bribe the captain to miss the caravan. Like the Florentine, he was willing to spend his wealth, risk his reputation, his position, his life even, to help Sir Anthony in an enterprise from which he could not conceivably derive any benefit. Sir Anthony, merely by his appearance, so it seems, was able to convince almost anyone that it was a privilege to serve him.

Even without the threat of a military expedition from Babylon, the journey was hazardous enough. In this wild outlying area of the Ottoman Empire the Englishmen were in constant danger, as much from the Turkish troops stationed in the country as from the ill-conditioned local inhabitants. As they travelled laboriously through deserts and wildernesses of thick wood and towns reduced to ruins by Tamberlane, they had to talk, bluff, bribe and fight their way out of one menacing situation after another. "Thievish and brutish" Kurds crept out of their caves to rob them, even stealing turbans from the heads of the Persian merchants while they lay asleep at night; innocently they rode right into a force of ten thousand Turkish soldiers; a few days later they were detained by the governor of a Turkish fort. It was an incalculable relief when they crossed the frontier into the pleasant fertile

<sup>1</sup> From Sir Anthony's *Relation*.

country of King Hitherbagg, an ally of Persia, who received them kindly ; and when they at last found themselves on Persian soil, no wonder they were " overcome with joy " and together fell down on their knees to thank God for His protection and Sir Anthony's " gallant spirit " !

As soon as they entered Persia they became aware of a changed atmosphere, of a civilisation far richer than that of the brutal, warlike, sensual, pleasure-loving Turks. Since the reign of Shah Tahmasp and the period when fanaticism, war and anarchy had driven away Anthony Jenkinson and the audacious agents of the Muscovy Company, Persia had been transformed. After a decade of civil war the throne had fallen to Shah Abbas,<sup>1</sup> a monarch fit to rank with the other famous strong rulers of the sixteenth century, Queen Elizabeth, Charles V, Solieman the Magnificent, Akbar—the Moghul Emperor. Under his shrewd and ruthless rule, a peace, welcome if unfavourable, had put an end to the incessant exhausting wars with Turkey<sup>2</sup> ; brigands had been mercilessly liquidated, bridges and caravanserais built for the convenience of travellers. At Isfahan, the new capital, had sprung up a glorious city of iridescent coloured domes, mosques and palaces, gardens and fountains ; and here were produced, superbly and enchantingly, all types of Persian art : miniatures, paintings, calligraphy, illuminated manuscripts, lacquer work, ceramics, carpets, embroidery and brocades. In this exotic, utterly unfamiliar setting, the two English knights, and their fellow-countrymen who had followed them from the homely broils of Europe through the hideous dangers of a barbarous journey, were to play their adventurous rôle.

Although the people received them with kindness, the Englishmen knew that they were on trial, that every action must be calculated, that one false step could cost their fortunes, perhaps their lives. In order that no one of importance might see them tired and travel-stained, they entered Kazvin secretly and at night. The next morning the Lord Steward arrived at their lodging to welcome them. The King, he explained, was away at the Tatarian wars,<sup>3</sup> but pending His Majesty's instructions he could offer Sir Anthony twenty pounds in gold a day for his expenses ; and he thereupon laid the first instalment at his feet. Sir Anthony established his position in the country at once and for all by treating this offering with that contempt which was always his strongest asset. " Turning over the money with his foot," he informed the Lord Steward that he came not to beg from the King, but, in his own words, " with the adventure of my body to second him in his princely wars."

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Shah Tahmasp in 1576 there was a period of civil war until Shah Abbas came to the throne in 1587. He ruled until 1629.

<sup>2</sup> After the defeat of the Persian army in 1587 Shah Abbas made peace, ceding his western provinces to Turkey.

<sup>3</sup> Shah Abbas was then at war with the Uzbeks, a powerful tribe on his northern frontier which he decisively defeated.



At this speech the Persian crumbled, and addressed him as a royal prince; but Sir Anthony, who was too clever an adventurer to resort to imposture, replied that he was merely the second son of an English knight.<sup>1</sup> He must have realised that by insisting on his modest birth he emphasised his personal qualities, much as a successful modern business man might seek prestige by admitting that he once sold newspapers in the streets. From this moment the Englishmen were treated with almost exaggerated respect, and Sir Anthony was accorded a status high enough to facilitate the prosecution of his private ambitions.

The Englishmen passed their time attending feasts and receiving presents until it was announced that the King was returning from the wars. It was decided that they should ride out of the city to meet him, accompanied by the governor; and thanks to the donation of the Florentine merchant and the generosity of the Persians they were able to put up an imposing show. They were all well mounted, and they were magnificently dressed in cloth of gold, cloth of silver, crimson velvet, blue damask, yellow damask and carnation taffeta. Both Sherleys wore jewelled turbans; Sir Anthony carried his sword in a scarf that had cost a thousand pounds, being embroidered with pearls and diamonds, while his boots were embroidered with pearls and rubies. As for Mr. Manwaring, he found himself created Marshal and riding in front of Sir Anthony with a white staff in his hand, Sir Anthony having assured him that in Persia it was customary for every great man to be so attended.

Their reception by Shah Abbas must have been one of the most astonishing of all their experiences :

“ So after we were half a mile forth of the city we saw such a prospect as is not usually seen ; which was, twelve hundred soldiers, horsemen, carrying twelve hundred heads of men on their lances, and some having the ears of men put on strings and hanged about their necks ; next after these came the trumpeters, making a wonderful noise ; because they are contrary to our English trumpets, these trumpets being two yards and a half in length, with the great end big, and so much compass as a hat. Next after him came the drummers, their drums being made of brass, and carried upon camels ; then after them came his six standard bearers ; then after came his twelve pages, bearing every one a lance in his hand ; then a good distance after them came the King, riding alone with a lance in his hand, his bow and arrows, sword and target, hanging by his side, being a man of

<sup>1</sup> The eldest brother, Sir Thomas Sherley, was infected with the same desire for distinction, but he was a bungling adventurer. His most spectacular exploit was to sail with three ships on a private crusade against the Turks, but this led to nothing except three years' imprisonment, with torture, in Constantinople, from which he was able to obtain his release only through the intervention of the King of England, James I.

low stature, but very strongly made, and swarthy of complexion. Next after the King came his Lieutenant General of the field, and all his bows in rank like a half moon ; and after them came his officers in the wars, to the number of twenty thousand soldiers, all horsemen. So at our first encounter of the King, Sir Anthony and his brother did alight off their horses, and came to kiss the King's foot ; . . . after that was performed the King did look upon them both very stately, and afterwards did look upon us all, giving never a word to Sir Anthony, but bid the Lieutenant General place him according as he had given direction, and so the King set spurs to his horse, and did ride away for the space of an hour, . . . After the King was departed, the Lord Steward told Sir Anthony that it was the custom to entertain strangers in that fashion, but willed him to have patience awhile, and he should see the event ; so within an hour the King returned back as fast as his horse would go, and having following him sixteen women on horseback richly attired, and when he came close to Sir Anthony the women did holloa, and gave such a cry, much like the wild Irish, which did make us wonder at it ; then after they had made an end, the King came and embraced Sir Anthony and his brother, kissing them both three or four times over, and taking Sir Anthony by the hand, swearing a great oath that he should be his sworn brother, and so he did call him always, and so the King marched along, putting Sir Anthony on his right hand."

On their return to the city they were welcomed to the royal palace, where there was the inevitable feasting and music, followed by polo in the palace gardens, a game unknown to them and which, probably, they were the first of their countrymen to see. The Englishmen watched from a window, but the King took part in the game, drums and trumpets being sounded whenever he hit the ball. His hospitality to the English was extravagant, not to say caressing ; taking Mr. Manwaring aside, he threw his arms round his neck, kissed him three or four times, and invited him to become his servant. This fate was tactfully averted by Sir Anthony.

They must all have been worn out when the King at last conducted them back to their house ; but they were given no chance of taking the rest which they undoubtedly desired after this exacting day :

" So after we had supped at our own house, Sir Anthony, not thinking the King would have seen him any more that night, because it waxed late, he determined to have gone to his rest, but he was disappointed, for the Lord Steward came for him, with sixteen torches and some twenty gentlemen to attend him, to bring Sir Anthony and all his company to the King, to spend that night with him, but when we came where the King was, such a spectacle we did behold which did

almost ravish us with joy to see it ; you shall understand that in the middle of the city of Casbin there is a place which they call the Bazar, made in fashion like the Exchange in London, though not so beautiful, yet three times as big, where they keep shops of all manners of trades ; for that time the shopkeepers had set forth their commodities in the best manner, and themselves apparelled very gallantly. In the middle of that place standeth a round thing made with a seat, set up with six pillars, . . . on which place they use to sell apparel and other commodities ; that being bravely trimmed with rich carpets, both of gold and silver and silk, and the King's chair of estate placed in the middle, the chair being of silver plate set with turquoises and rubies very thick, and six great diamonds, which did shew like stars, the seat being of rich scarlet embroidered with pearl, and the multitude of lamps hanging about it were innumerable ; the King, when he came unto it, did cause Sir Anthony to ascend up into that princely throne, and standing by the chair with his Viceroy, and other of his nobility, did take Sir Anthony by the hand, and willed him to sit down in his chair of estate ; . . . and placing all of us of Sir Anthony's company round about the throne, sitting on carpets cross-legged, according to the country fashion ; then came there in a royal banquet with drums and trumpets sounding before it, which was brought in by twenty-four noblemen, and when the drums and trumpets departed, the music came in playing, with twenty women very richly apparelled, singing and dancing before the music. So when the banquet was ended, the King arose, taking Sir Anthony by the arm, and so they walked, arm in arm, in every street in the city, the twenty women going before, singing and dancing, and his noblemen coming after, with each of them one of our company by the hand, and at every turning there was variety of music, and lamps hanging on either side their streets of seven heights one above another, which made a glorious show ; and thus for the space of eight days and nights did we spend the time in sporting and banqueting with all the pomps they could devise."

Sir Anthony somehow managed to maintain himself on this pinnacle of favour, and during the rest of their stay in Persia the Englishmen led the life of pampered courtiers. They must have become inured to surprise in this fantastic oriental world, at once glittering and gruesome, violent and voluptuous. There were great parades of soldiers with drums and trumpets and men's heads on lances ; bull-baiting, bear-baiting, wrestling between naked men, and fighting between camels and between antelopes. Arabian Nights revels alternated with scenes of appalling bestiality, for Shah Abbas kept his subjects in fear of him by an unpredictable and savage temper. The ground was carpeted with taffeta and satin at his approach ; he ordered it to be taken up

and distributed to his guards. His soldiers gave an exhibition of skirmishing which disappointed him, and "like to an Hercules" he charged into their midst, hacking blindly with his sword, killing and wounding many, slashing one man in half with a single blow. When one of his servants was accused of attempted rape, he had the man tortured and mutilated on the spot, and ordered him to be left on the ground to starve.

One day a present arrived for Sir Anthony of camels, tents, fine carpets, horses, and saddles of velvet and gold plate studded with jewels, together with an invitation to meet the King four days' journey away from the city accompanied by ten of his best men. Sir Anthony, anticipating a "trial of valour," selected the most warlike of his gentlemen, and urged them to show themselves "like true Englishmen" if the circumstances so demanded. But the King greeted them with gushing affection, and the occasion turned out to be one of his usual hunting and pleasure expeditions ;

"That night at supper, the King was very pleasant with us, until such time as one of his noblemen had angered him, upon some small occasion, and then we went to rest. The next morning the King was stirring very early, and being in wrath, caused this nobleman which had offended him, to be tied with chains to a stake, and ten of the King's gentlemen to throw quinces at him to the number of one hundred. The King himself did throw the first, so after they had thrown, every man one quince, Sir Anthony stepped to the King, entreating him to pardon him, and throw no more ; the King presently smiled and said, 'Brother, it shall be as thou wilt have it,' and caused him to be untied, and the nobleman came and kissed Sir Anthony's hand ; so that night we went twelve miles to a gallant city, called Kaschan, spending the time by the way in hawking and hunting, and we came into the city in the evening, where we were royally entertained by the citizens. . . . About ten o'clock in the night we were sent for to meet the King in the Piazza, which is a fair place, like unto Smithfield, standing in the middle of the town ; there we found the King and his nobility, with great store of torches, and round the place were lamps hanged on the sides of their houses unlighted ; so the King took us upon the top of a turret, and caused us to look down towards the lamps, which lighted all at the twinkling of an eye, and likewise on the tops of all the houses in the city were lamps which made a glorious shew, thicker than the stars in the sky. Then were such stately fireworks, made by a Turk, that Sir Anthony did wonder at, which seemed as if dragons were fighting in the air, with many other varieties, especially one firework worth noting, which was this, there was a great fountain of water in the Piazza, out of which from the very bottom there would arise things

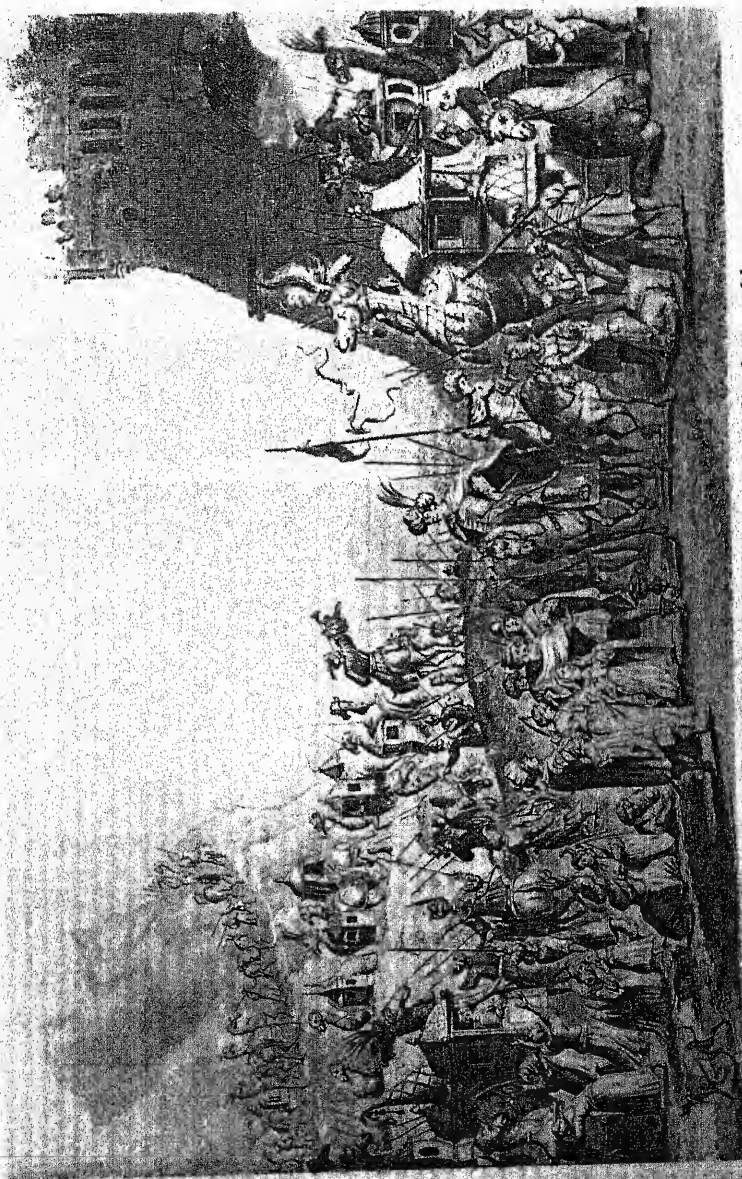


like fishes, throwing fire out of their mouths a dozen yards high, which we thought a great wonder."

At Isfahan, where the King eventually took up residence, the Englishmen spent six months, mainly engaged in hunting and hawking. Meanwhile, during all this time Sir Anthony was winning Shah Abbas to his great scheme for the destruction of Turkey and his own advancement. He was completely successful. The King appointed him his ambassador to the courts of Europe, and dismissed the Turkish envoy, who had just arrived to renew the league between the two countries, with a declaration of war. Sir Anthony left for Europe furnished with letters and presents to all the Christian princes, and accompanied by a Persian, referred to by Manwaring as Sean Olibeg, whose rôle was to testify to Sir Anthony's credentials and the King's sincerity. Most of the Englishmen went with him, but Sir Robert, and five others, one of whom was a cannon-founder, stayed behind to help Shah Abbas reorganise his army for the coming war.

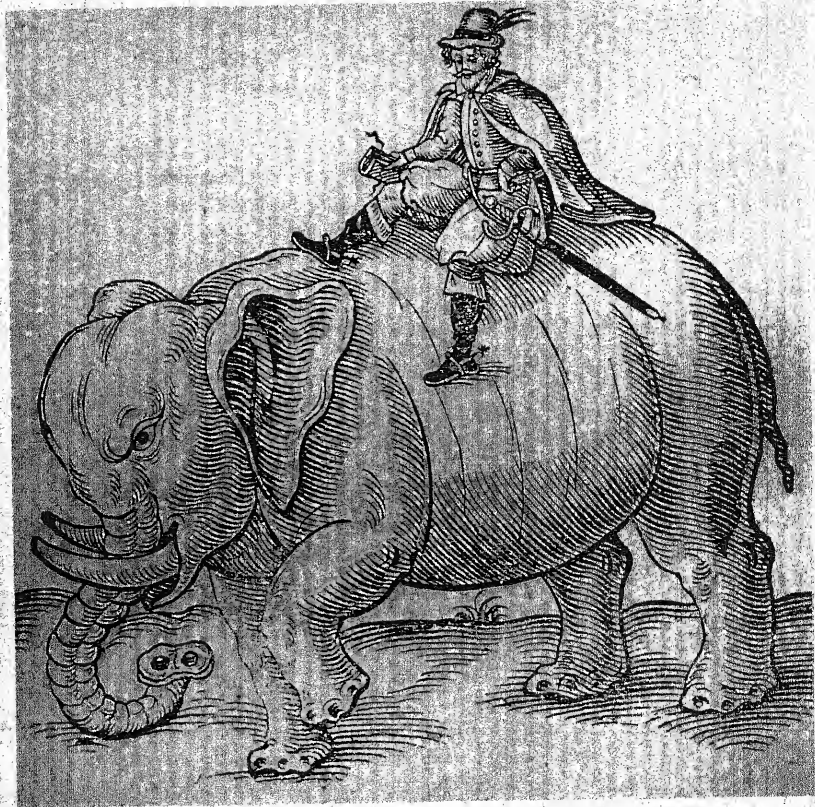
Sir Anthony's subsequent adventures were conducted on the same grand high level of success. His career as Persian ambassador was brilliant, in spite of the jealous scheming of Sean Olibeg, who, quite immune to his fascination, made every effort to discredit him and represent himself as the true ambassador. Their visit to Moscow, where they first went, travelling by the arduous route across the Caspian and up the Volga, was utterly wrecked by these squabbles; but in Prague Sir Anthony was sumptuously received by the Emperor Rudolf II, and enjoyed six months of "revels and feasting and other pleasures of the court"; without, however, doing anything much for his employer. At Nuremberg, Augusta, and Munich, seat of the Duke of Bavaria, his visits were equally agreeable and ineffective. By the time he reached Rome the continual "jars and breaches" with Sean Olibeg had become intolerable; violent words were exchanged, and the Persian "in a sullen mood" set out for his own country, bent on procuring Sir Anthony's downfall. But when he arrived, he found Sir Robert well established in the favour of Shah Abbas, and all he received for his pains was to have his hands and his tongue cut off, followed by his head.

Sir Robert was almost as successful as his brother. In the war against the Turks, which had to be undertaken in spite of the fact that Sir Anthony had procured no help from Europe, he brilliantly distinguished himself. As a reward, Shah Abbas, apparently undismayed by the example of Sir Anthony, sent him as his second ambassador to the Christian princes. Sir Robert also omitted to serve anyone except himself, but this he amply accomplished. In Poland he was lavishly entertained by Sigismund III; in Germany Rudolf II created



Agents of the Shah of Persia collecting concubines for the royal harem.  
*From a seventeenth century engraving. By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE XVI



Thomas Coryate riding an elephant. From a wood cut in the rare pamphlet, *Thomas Coriate Traveller for the English wits: Greeting. From the Court of the Great Mogul, Resident at the Towne of Asmere in Easterne India* 1616.

*By courtesy of the British Museum.*



him Knight of the Roman Empire and Earl Palatine ; while in Rome, Pope Paul V conferred on him the title of Earl of the Sacred Palace of Lateran, and Chamberlain, together with the honourable and profitable right of legitimatising bastards. In 1611 he arrived in England, accompanied by his Persian wife. According to Stow they were well received by James I, and Prince Henry stood as godfather to their son who was born at this time. A later visit in 1624 was however marred by the unexpected arrival of another jealous Persian claiming to be the true representative of Shah Abbas. An embarrassing situation developed at court, and everyone was relieved when the rival ambassadors simultaneously set sail for Persia accompanied by Sir Dodmore Cotton, sent by the King of England to Shah Abbas with instructions to find out which of them was the impostor. Both ended badly. The Persian poisoned himself during the voyage, and Sir Robert, on his return to Persia, was disowned by Shah Abbas, and died in Kazvin of disappointment.

Sir Anthony also died discredited. Giving up any pretension of serving Shah Abbas, he roamed the courts of Europe for many years, living in hand to mouth luxury. His innumerable intrigues aroused suspicion in England, and he was never allowed to return to his native country. For a long time, however, he did very well for himself ; in 1605 he appeared in Morocco as ambassador from the Emperor of Germany, and is described as living in great state on money borrowed at an exorbitant rate of interest from the local Jews. Later he was touring Europe again collecting support for an expedition against the Turks, and in 1609 he actually set sail from Sicily in command of an Armada, which had been largely financed by the King of Spain. But this expedition, so ostentatiously prepared, ended in a fiasco. Deserted by his friends, and hounded by his many creditors, he retired to Spain, where the King allowed him a small pension. Here he spent the remainder of his life, ineffectually scheming and plotting to regain his former importance. It was even rumoured that he planned the invasion and conquest of his own country, and this may well have been true.

The fame of these gorgeous but futile adventurers was considerable. A play was written about them and produced in London in 1607 ; in the nineteenth century an enthusiastic clergyman, the Reverend Scott Surtees of Dinsdale-on-Tees, even attempted to prove that Sir Anthony was the author of Shakespeare's plays.<sup>1</sup> But amid so much flash and illusion, one thing they did achieve : during their first stay in Persia Shah Abbas granted them a "firman," an edict offering to all Christian merchants religious liberty, and the right to trade in any part of his dominions. These concessions were in due course taken advantage of by the newly-formed East India Company. In 1617

<sup>1</sup> In *William Shakespeare of Stratford-on-Avon*. Published 1888.



factories were started at Shiraz and Isfahan, and some years later the Persians combined with the English to expel the Portuguese from the island of Hormuz, commanding the Persian Gulf—one of their most important possessions in the East, which they had held from the beginning of the sixteenth century. From this time English trade with Persia was continuous, and Portuguese power in the East rapidly crumbled.

By the end of the sixteenth century the English had come to realise that the only way they could participate in the riches of the East was by challenging the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. The arrogant project of finding private sea routes to Cathay and the Spice Islands through the Arctic had failed; Steven Borrough, Martin Frobisher and John Davis had proved, gallantly if expensively, that the North-east and North-west Passages were less convenient than had originally been supposed. To trade with the East by land was clearly out of the question; Jenkinson had discovered the old caravan route across Central Asia to be impracticable; while the more southerly route into Asia by way of Syria and Persia only led the English travellers into the preserves of the Portuguese.

In 1583 the new Levant Company had sent a party of merchant-travellers to explore eastwards from Aleppo. These men had successfully reached Babylon and sailed down the Tigris to the Persian Gulf, only to be arrested by the Portuguese governor of Hormuz and sent as prisoners to Goa. This misfortune, however, they had managed to turn to their advantage; for having contrived their escape, they had been able to wander through India, gathering invaluable information about its people and trade. "When they reached Fatehpur, seat of the Great Moghul, one of them—a jeweller—had settled down there in the pay of the Emperor, while the leader of the expedition had decided to return home. But another member of the party, Ralph Fitch, had boldly proceeded alone down the Ganges, across the Bay of Bengal, up the Irrawaddy to Pegu, capital of the rich kingdom of Burma, on to Malacca, where a Portuguese fort barred the way to China and the Spice Islands, and home by Ceylon and Persia. His glittering and tantalisingly brief account<sup>1</sup> of this wonderful journey revealed to English merchants the rich prizes that awaited them if they could once break the monopoly of the Portuguese. In Fatehpur, he reported, the chief articles of trade were rubies and diamonds and pearls; at Patanaw, gold was dug from pits in the ground; the King of Burma, who inhabited a sumptuously gilded palace in the new city of Pegu, possessed mines yielding rubies and sapphires

<sup>1</sup> Included in *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, a collection of travels published in 1616, compiled by Samuel Purchas (1575?-1626), an editor less learned and reliable than Hakluyt.

and spinels, and a fabulous treasure which included enormous jewelled images, and four white elephants which ate off platters of silver and gold.<sup>1</sup>

But before he returned an attempt had already been put in hand to claim for England a share of this oriental wealth.<sup>2</sup> English enterprise in the East began in 1591, when a fleet of ships first sailed into the Indian Ocean round the Cape of Good Hope. By this time the English had become confident of their power to overcome their decadent rival, Portugal, now united with their other mercantile enemy, Spain. Since the voyages of Willoughby and Chancellor they had proved themselves formidable seamen and bold imperialists. Hawkins had crossed the Atlantic, trading slaves by force between the Portuguese Guinea coast and the Spanish West Indies; Drake had passed through the Straits of Magellan and circumnavigated the world; Sir Humphrey Gilbert had annexed Newfoundland; and Amadas and Barlow had taken possession of Virginia, thus consolidating the vague territorial claims based on the supposed achievements of Cabot. Spain, in spite of her vast empire and wealth, was no longer feared; to seize her ships in the Atlantic, to pillage her settlements in America and the West Indies, had become the favourite sport of Englishmen who prided themselves on their valour. These adventurers, the celebrated "privateers" of Elizabeth's reign, operated with the tacit or open approval of the English government, and were regarded as national heroes. Drake, the most famous of them, had for years terrorised the Spanish colonies on the Atlantic coast of Central America, and when, the first of his countrymen, had he sailed through the Straits of Magellan in 1578, he had looted at least half a million pounds worth of gold, silver and jewels from their ports and shipping on the Pacific coast. Later, when the war against Spain became official, he had brilliantly distinguished himself by burning a Spanish fleet in Cadiz harbour, and as Vice-Admiral of the English fleet had directed the defeat of the Armada.

It was therefore with considerable assurance that the Englishmen of this first expedition to the East set sail for the Indian Ocean, not intending to trade—for they carried no cargoes—but to explore the route and plunder Portuguese shipping. But frightful disappointments awaited them: only a few of them were to return, more than three years later, with two of their three ships lost, and nothing gained except experience.

<sup>1</sup> Pegu had been rebuilt by the father of the King reigning when Fitch visited the city. This monarch, aptly named by the Portuguese Braginoco, had united Burma and conquered Siam, capturing an enormous loot. The most valuable item was the four white elephants, for Buddhists regarded a white elephant as sacred, believing that the soul of a future World Saviour lodged in its body, and that the possession of it was a sign that its owner would become Universal Monarch.

<sup>2</sup> He reached England on April 29th, 1591. Lancaster had set sail for the East on the tenth of the same month. Fitch's report encouraged the formation of the East India Company in 1600.

These disasters, however, were in no way due to the Portuguese, who made little effort to resist them, but must be attributed partly to bad weather, and partly to their own conduct. This was one of the nastiest expeditions of the period. Scurvy, calms, tempests and contrary winds imposed almost continuous sufferings; but these misfortunes were hardly so great a handicap as the vile disposition of the crews. Edmund Barker's narrative of the voyage shows Elizabethan seamen at their very worst; callous and disloyal, devoid of any motive more inspiring than maniacal greed. The only passages expressing satisfaction are those describing what they plundered from the Portuguese, and the natural products they found that were good to eat. Their grab and gobble attitude is indeed typical of this pioneer age of travel; interest in natural history, which demands that plants and animals should be regarded not solely as possible food, only developed in the seventeenth century, when experience had eased some of the hardships of voyaging. Writing of Table Bay, where the sick and hungry men first went ashore, Barker recalls with evident relish how they feasted on mussels, cranes, geese, penguins and seals; and oxen and sheep which they bought from the natives. The oxen, he notes, were "very large and well fleshed, but not fat," the sheep were "very big and good meat"; and then he concludes indifferently: "There be divers sorts of wild beasts, as the antelope, . . . the redfallow deer, with other great beasts unknown to us. Here are also great store of overgrown monkeys; . . ."

*A voyage with three tall ships, the Penelope, admirall, the Marchant Royall, vice-admirall, and the Edward Bonaventure, rere-admirall, to the East Indies, by the Cape of Buona Speransa, to Quitangone, neere Mozambique, to the iles of Comoro and Zanzibar on the backside of Africa, and beyond Cape Comori in India to the iles of Nicubar and of Gomes Pule (within two leagues of Sumatra), to the ilands of Pule Pinoam, and thence to the main land of Malacca. Begun by M. George Raymond, in the yeere 1591, and performed by M. James Lancaster; and written from the mouth of Edmund Barker of Ipswich (his lieutenant in the sayd voyage) by M. Richard Hakluyt.*

As usual in these early expeditions, the mistake was made of starting far too late in the year. The ships set sail in April; calms and storms delayed their progress, and it was two months before they reached Table Bay. By this time so many of the men were ill with scurvy that it was decided to leave behind the *Merchant Royal* with fifty sick men who should sail her home when they recovered, and to distribute the rest of her crew between the other two ships. These two ships then

rounded the Cape "very speedily," but off Cape Corrientes they encountered "a mighty storm and extreme gusts of wind"; and the *Penelope*, carrying the commander, George Raymond, disappeared, never to be seen again. Four days later the *Edward Bonaventure* was struck by lightning:

"Four days after this uncomfortable separation, in the morning toward ten of the clock, we had a terrible clap of thunder, which slew four of our men outright, their necks being wrung in sunder without speaking any word, and of ninety-four men there was not one untouched; whereof some were stricken blind, others were bruised in their legs and arms, and others in their breasts, so that they voided blood two days after; others were drawn out in length, as though they had been racked."

In the Indian Ocean they were still dogged by misfortune. At one of the Comoro islands, thirty who landed in the only remaining boat to find water were attacked and murdered by the Moorish inhabitants, in full view of their companions on the ship, who, having no boat, were unable to go to their rescue. At Zanzibar, where they stopped for food, they were lucky enough to be left alone by the Portuguese, who had a small settlement there, but the surgeon died of sun-stroke, as Barker puts it: "negligently catching a great heat in his head."

Lancaster,<sup>1</sup> now commander of the expedition, determined to sail to Cape Comorin, the southernmost point of India; but contrary winds drove him from his course, and frustrated in turn his attempts to reach Sokotra, the Laccadives, and the Nicobar Islands. Very short of supplies, much troubled by the "contagious"<sup>2</sup> winter weather, and with most of his men again ill, he finally reached the island of Penang; but there was nothing to eat there except oysters and whelks, and here twenty-six more of his men died. Only thirty-four were left alive, a third of whom were too ill to work, when they sailed into the Malacca Straits, but here they none the less managed to hold up a number of ships, plundering those of the Portuguese, and releasing those of the natives. A cargo of pepper, belonging to some Jesuits and a Portuguese "biscuit-baker," was among their prizes, also a luxury cargo carried by a Portuguese vessel coming from Goa, most of which, however, was looted by the sailors:

"At our coming aboard we found in her sixteen pieces of brass<sup>3</sup> and three hundred butts of Canary wine and nipar wine,<sup>4</sup> which is made

<sup>1</sup> Sir James Lancaster, 1554-1618.

<sup>2</sup> Contagious: the word is here used in its old sense, meaning "foul."

<sup>3</sup> Cannon.

<sup>4</sup> Arrack—spirits distilled from the sap of a palm tree.



of palm trees, and raisin wine, which is also very strong; as also all kinds of haberdasher wares, as hats, red caps knit of Spanish wool, worsted stockings knit, shoes, velvets, taffataes, chamlets,<sup>1</sup> and silks, abundance of suckets,<sup>2</sup> rice, Venice glasses, certain papers full of false and counterfeit stones (which an Italian brought from Venice to deceive the rude Indians withal), abundance of playing cards, two or three packs of French paper. Whatsoever came of the treasure, which usually is brought in royals of plate<sup>3</sup> in this galleon, we could not find it. After that the mariners had disorderly pill'd this rich ship, the captain, because they would not follow his commandment to unlade those excellent wines into the *Edward*, abandoned her and let her drive at sea, taking out of her the choicest things that she had."

These were the moments that made the terrible voyages worthwhile, that compensated for the illness and hunger and thirst and exposure and terror of death, the moments when the meanest sailor swilled down gentlemen's wines and covered his rags with fashionable finery. But the incident can have given little satisfaction to the commander, who was concerned with procuring a rich cargo for his backers at home.

To make good the loss of this rich prize Lancaster traded at the island of Junkceylon, where he was able to buy from the King such rarities as ambergris and the horns of the "abath" or female unicorn—actually rhinoceros horns—then highly valued as "a sovereign remedy against poison." He was however unable to supply the King with the commoditise he most needed, which were gilt armour and shirts of mail.

Lancaster then turned back for Ceylon, where he intended to lie in wait for the Portuguese ships which were known to be returning from Bengal, Burma and Siam, freighted with rich cargoes of "pavilions for beds," "wrought quilts," "pintados" or printed cotton cloths, rubies and diamonds. But the crew, now thoroughly out of hand, refused to wait for these prizes which would have made the expedition financially successful; while Lancaster lay ill, "more like to die than to live," they mutinied and forced him to sail for home.

A tedious voyage, with adverse winds that prevented them from rounding the Cape for more than two months, brought them at last to St. Helena, where they glutted themselves with fruit, fish, fowl, hogs and goat. Here they were amazed to find a solitary Englishman clothed in skins; he was one of their former companions who had sailed in the ship sent home from Table Bay, and had been left on the island because he was considered too ill to have any chance of reaching England alive. There

<sup>1</sup> Cloth made out of silk and camel's hair.

<sup>2</sup> Suckets: sweets.

<sup>3</sup> Rials of plate: Spanish silver coins, current in the East, the eighth part of a piastre.

was a boistrous reunion, which ended as badly as everything else on this expedition :

“ After our arrival at Santa Helena, I, Edmund Barker, went on shore with four of five Peguins<sup>1</sup> which we had taken, and our surgeon ; where in an house by the chapel I found an Englishman, one John Segar of Burie<sup>2</sup> in Suffolk, who was left there eighteen months before by Abraham Kendall, who put in there with the *Royal Merchant*, and left him there to refresh him on the island, being otherwise like to have perished on shipboard ; and at our coming we found him as fresh in colour and in as good plight of body to our seeming as might be, but crazed in mind and half out of his wits, as afterwards we perceived ; for whether he were put in fright of us, not knowing at first what we were, whether friends or foes, or of sudden joy when he understood we were his old consorts and countrymen, he became idle-headed, and for eight days space neither night nor day took any natural rest, and so at length died for lack of sleep.”

When the men had recovered, Lancaster proposed to sail to Brazil to obtain more supplies, and no doubt to take a look at Pernambuco which he was planning to raid in a future expedition ; but once again the crew defied him and insisted on sailing straight to England. Contrary winds, however, as usual frustrated them ; after six weeks in the tropics their supplies almost ran out, some of them threatened to reduce the number of hungry mouths by murder, and Lancaster, in desperation, induced them to sail for Trinidad.

Their bad luck held. A current swept them past Trinidad to the small island of Mona, where little food could be obtained. They then decided to sail to Newfoundland, where they would be certain of getting relief from the fishing fleet ; but they ran into violent storms, and instead were buffeted about the West Indies for six months and reduced to a state of famine. Back again at Mona, Lancaster, Barker and sixteen others landed in search of provisions. While they were on shore the half-dozen sailors left on board with quite incredible callousness sailed away in the ship and surrendered to the Spaniards. Lancaster and his companions nearly starved to death before they were rescued by some French ships, and it was many months before they were able to procure passages back to France.

Lancaster reached England, after an absence of more than three years, to report a voyage that had been abominably long and hard, costly in lives and ships, and financially a complete failure. But the London merchants were in no way discouraged. In spite of all his misfortunes Lancaster had demonstrated that English ships could

<sup>1</sup> Men of Pegu, in Burma.

<sup>2</sup> Bury St. Edmunds.

roam the Indian Ocean and molest the Portuguese with impunity ; he had also revealed a world where such luxuries as ambergris, unicorns' horns, bed canopies, pearls, rubies and rare silks might be exchanged for English products. Moreover they soon came to realise that if they failed to take advantage of the weakness of the Portuguese empire, another power would do so. In 1595, the Dutch, who were to become much more dangerous rivals, sent out an expedition which reached Bantam, the pepper port of Java, and within the next few years they practically acquired a monopoly of the trade with the East Indies and the Spice Islands.

It was necessary to act promptly, in order that the wealth of the East, coveted for centuries, should not be seized from the English at the very moment when it lay within their grasp. In 1600 money was subscribed, the East India Company was incorporated by a charter from Queen Elizabeth, and in the following year a fleet of four ships, carrying cargoes and ready money, was sent to the East under the command of Lancaster, who had now added to his reputation by a successful raid on Pernambuco.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the usual delays caused by contrary winds, this voyage was a most satisfactory beginning to English eastern trade. Comparatively few died of scurvy, for Lancaster had discovered that lime-juice prevented the disease and insisted on dosing his men with it. He was the first commander known to have used this treatment. He brought his ships safely to Achin, in Sumatra, where he exchanged courtesies with the local King, who was then being solicited by Dutch, Portuguese and French merchants, and made so good an impression that he induced this monarch to connive with him in the plundering of Portuguese shipping in the Straits of Malacca. Having captured a vessel with a cargo rich enough to ensure the financial success of the voyage, Lancaster returned to Achin "much bound to God that had eased him of a very heavy care," traded for pepper to fill his remaining ships, and, according to the anonymous recorder of the expedition,<sup>2</sup> took leave of this Mohammedan ruler in an atmosphere of sanctified cordiality :

"For a present to Her Majesty he sent three fair cloths richly wrought with gold, of very cunning work, and a very fair ruby in a ring : and gave the General<sup>3</sup> another ring and a ruby in it. And when the General took his leave, the King said unto him : 'Have you the Psalm of David extant among you ?' The General answered : 'Yea, and we sing them daily.' Then said the King : 'I and the rest of these nobles about me will sing a psalm to God for your prosperity' ; and so they did, very solemnly. And after it was ended, the King

<sup>1</sup> 1594-5.

<sup>2</sup> Published in *Purchas his Pilgrimes*.

<sup>3</sup> The commander, Lancaster.

said : ' I would hear you sing another psalm, although in your own language.' So, there being in the company some twelve of us, we sung another psalm. And after the psalm ended, the General took his leave of the King."

None the less deadly danger beset the two English ships on the homeward voyage. Off the Cape of Good Hope they ran into frightful storms, during which Lancaster's ship lost her rudder and was left driving "up and down the sea like a wreck." Unwilling to risk the safety of the other ship, Lancaster ordered her captain to sail straight home, giving him a letter to the East India Company written with dignified and touching resignation : " I cannot tell where you should look for me, if you send out any pinnace to seek me ; because I live at the devotion of the wind and seas. And thus fare you well ; desiring God to send us a merry meeting in this world, if it be his good will and pleasure. . . . Your very loving friend, James Lancaster." But unlike the men of his earlier voyage, the captain, who was "an honest and a good man, and loved the general well, and was loath to leave him in so great distress," stood by him. The weather calmed, a new rudder was fixed, and the heroic Lancaster safely reached England where he was congratulated and knighted by the new monarch James I.

The merchants of the newly formed East India Company lost no time in sending out another fleet of ships. The cargo Lancaster had brought back was not a particularly valuable one, as the market for pepper was limited ; but incalculable opportunities were open to them : the exploitation of Asia had begun. Few Englishmen have ever held so privileged a position. The East India Company had been given the exclusive right of trading with all countries that lay beyond the Cape of Good Hope or the Straits of Magellan ; only merchants of the company were allowed to trade in this vast and rich area of the world, and no one could be a member of the company who did not hold a capital share. The wealth of the East had at last become accessible to England, but it had been given to a small clique—to be exact—to a hundred and twenty-five men.

The East India Company, although several times threatened by rival organisations, profited from this wonderful monopoly for more than two hundred and fifty years. Its dividends averaged twenty-two per cent ; it made and ruled British India ; it financed the state with loans as great as three million pounds. In its early years its activities extended to the Moluccas and Japan ; but the Dutch proved brutal competitors in the Far East, and after 1623, when they tortured and massacred the British residents at Amboina, the Company concentrated on the Indian Ocean.



Here the Portuguese had been subdued without much difficulty. Two decisive naval victories in Swally Road, in the Gulf of Cambay, in 1612 and 1615, had asserted the supremacy of the English by sea and their right to hold a factory at Surat on the mainland; with the capture of Hormuz in 1622 the power of Portugal had been effectively broken. Meanwhile an English ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, had been received by the Great Moghul, the Emperor of India, Jahangir, and had induced this amiable but evasive ruler to consolidate the trading privileges obtained from the local officials on the coast.

During the seventeenth century the East India Company frequently came into collision with Dutch, Portuguese and French rivals, but by a combination of valour and diplomacy it managed to keep the upper hand in India. Factories were established at Madras and various places in the Bay of Bengal, and in 1661 Charles II acquired Bombay, conveniently situated outside the Moghul's dominions, as part of the dowry of his Portuguese bride.

*John Ovington; a Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689. Giving a large Account of that City, and its inhabitants, and of the English Factory there.*

When the chaplain John Ovington visited India in 1689, the East India Company, with its three presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay, had become a considerable political power, possessing the right to acquire territory, coin money, command troops, form alliances, make war and peace. Probity and grandeur, to use the words of Ovington, were the foundations of its prestige: it had earned the respect of the native inhabitants by ruling justly and trading honestly; impressed them by displaying a magnificence comparable to that of their oriental rulers. In accordance with this policy all the Company's employees—presidents, councillors, factors, writers and apprentices—were provided with luxurious board and lodging as well as their salaries. Better still, they were allowed splendid opportunities of making personal fortunes. Although the Company ferociously guarded its monopoly of trade between England and the East, it tolerated private English merchants, known as interlopers, who confined themselves to trading up and down the coasts of Asia. The Company's employees, to their immense advantage, were allowed to take part in this commerce. Ovington states that they often made profits of a hundred per cent in this coastal trade, and the poorest apprentice could get into business by borrowing from the Bannians—the Indian merchants. Sir John Child, the late President of Bombay, had managed to pile up a most pleasing fortune during his twenty years' residence in India, a fortune

which his successor, Mr. George Weldon, had also found means of enjoying :

" He amassed abundance of wealth during his stay, which was more than twenty years in India ; the least conjecture which is made of it is £100,000. His lady, whom he left behind him, who is famed for piety, charity, and an agreeable behaviour, is since married to Mr. George Weldon, fit to succeed him in his fortune and his bed. . . . The wealth which the general's lady and children do possess, demonstrates to what height of fortune the Company's servants may advance, when their diligence and fidelity engage the bounty and countenance of their masters to encourage them."

A great fortune, however, was necessary to compensate for living in Bombay at this period. Sir John had died of disappointment, after being forced to accept humiliating peace terms from the Sidi, the Admiral of the Moghul, who had recently besieged the English port ; but his can be called a privileged end. Most of the English were killed, nastily and indistinguishably, by the " fevers and fluxes " produced by the undrained swamps and the " stinking fish " that was used to manure the coconut groves. Children hardly ever survived, and it was a Bombay proverb that " two monsoons are the age of a man." The Company was put to much trouble and expense in replacing the population ; only drunkards and wasters offered themselves, and their debaucheries rendered their lives yet shorter. The virtuous Ovington was horrified by the general " luxury," " immodesty " and " prostitute dissolution of manners " in Bombay ; and argues, with that opulent use of words characteristic of his century, that these vices were in fact the real causes of the fatal infections :

" But there seldom happens any great defect in the natural world, without some preceding in the moral ; and the springs of our miseries and our misfortunes rise higher than merely secondary causes. For I cannot without horror mention to what pitch all vicious enormities were grown in this place, when the infection was most outrageous ; nor can I but think that the Divine Justice interposed, and forwarded these fatal infelicities, which are not wholly imputable to an impure contagion of the air, or the gross infection of the elements. These were made use of as fatal instruments of the direful excision, but the true cause of the malady lay deeper. Their principles of action, and the consequent evil practices of the English forwarded their miseries, and contributed to fill the air with those pestilential vapours that seized their vitals, and speeded their passage to the other world."

Divine Justice, unfortunately, could hardly be depended upon to distinguish the good from the wicked ; while Ovington's ship was at Bombay twenty out of the twenty-four apparently blameless passengers

passed away, and when he was invited to remain there as chaplain, he thought it wisest to decline the offer.

Not surprisingly, almost any woman could count on making a good marriage in Bombay, and this, Ovington considered, was only fair, considering the risks of the voyage :

"A modish garb and mien is all that is expected from any women that pass thither, who are many times matched to the chief merchants upon the place, and advance thereby their conditions to a very happy pitch. And considering what trouble attends the passage, especially of women, considering the hazard, as well as the length of the voyage, with some other casualties that sometimes happen on board, a modest woman may very well expect, without any great stock of honour or wealth, a husband of repute and riches here, after having run all this danger and trouble for him."

Surat, where the ship next called, was the oldest of the English factories, and although that exuberant traveller Thomas Coryate had killed himself there years before<sup>1</sup> in an orgy of sack drinking, by this time such excesses had become rare. Compared with Bombay, Surat was both healthy and respectable. The Company's servants, lodged all together in one of the finest houses of the city, pursued a stately, dignified, hierarchical mode of life well calculated to gain them the esteem of the Indian population. The President, attended always by forty or fifty native couriers, was an impressive figure. At mealtimes all the Englishmen of the factory sat according to rank at a long table ; the dishes and plates were of "pure silver, massy, substantial" ; three cooks, an English, an Indian and a Portuguese, provided delicacies for every palate. On holidays and other special occasions these meals became grand banquets, and afterwards, when the whole company took the air, it made an almost royal progress.

"Upon Sundays and public days, the entertainments keep up a face of more solemnity, and are made more large and splendid, deer and antelopes, peacocks, partridges, and all kinds of Persian fruits, pistachoes, plums, apricocks, cherries, etc., are all provided upon high festivals ; and European as well as Persian wines are drunk with temperance and alacrity. Then the King's health, and afterwards that of the Company's are sent round the table to the lowest writer that sits down. When the banquet is past they generally divert themselves for a while with some innocent easy recreation.

"The President upon solemn days generally invites the whole factory abroad to some pleasant garden adjacent to the city, where they may sit shaded from the beams of the sun, and refreshed by the neigh-

<sup>1</sup> In 1617 (see France).

bourhood of tanks and water-works. The President and his lady are brought hither in palanquins, supported each of them by six peons, which carry them by four at once on their shoulders. Before him at a little distance, are carried two large flags, or English ensigns, with curious Persian or Arabian horses of state, which are of great value, rich in their trappings, and gallantly equipped that are led before him.

"The furniture of these, and several other horses, whereon the factors ride, is very costly; the saddles are all of velvet richly embroidered, the head-stalls, reins, and croupers are all covered with solid wrought silver. The captain of the peons at this time ascends his horse, and leads forty or fifty others after him, which attend the President on foot. Next the President follow the council in large coaches, all open, except their wives are in them; the several knobs about them are covered with silver, and they are drawn by a pair of stately oxen. After them succeed the rest of the factors, either in coaches, or hackeries, or upon horses, . . . In this pompous procession does the President, when he goes abroad, travel thro' the heart of the city."

In the gardens beyond the town, in groves cooled by fountains and artificial ponds, luscious temptations awaited them:

"And here the dancing wenchs, or Quenchenies,<sup>1</sup> entertain you, if you please, with their sprightly motions, and soft charming aspects, with such amorous glances, and so taking irresistible a mien, that as they cannot but gain an admiration from all, so they frequently captivate a zealous rich spectator, and make their fortunes and booty of the enchanted admirer."

These privileged Englishmen, in the intervals of hard business, knew how to claim their share of oriental pleasures. Morning and evening, they would meet in "groves or gardens near the water side, there to spend an hour or two with a bottle of wine, and cold collation which they carry with them." When they escaped from the sober discipline of the factory, many of them slipped into the voluptuous customs of the country:

"The factors when they eat at home, do it after the English manner, but abroad they imitate the customs of the East in lying round the banquet upon the Persian carpets which are spread upon the ground, twenty or thirty foot in length."

But although Surat was healthier than Bombay, all of them knew that these lives of luxury and ostentation, so miraculously superior to anything they could have anticipated at home, were liable to end

<sup>1</sup> Hindu "Kanchani"—nautch girl.



suddenly ; that all too soon, they would have no outlet for their wealth save in the splendour of their tombs :

"The English and all the Europeans are privileged with convenient repositories for their dead, within half a mile of the city. There they endeavour to outvie each other in magnificent structures and stately monuments, whose large extent, beautiful architecture, and aspiring heads, make them visible at a remote distance, lovely objects to the sight, and give them the title of the principal ornaments and magnificencies about the city. The two most celebrated fabrics among the English, set off with stately towers and minarets, are that which was erected for Sir John Oxonton,<sup>1</sup> and the other for the renowned and honourable President Aungers. The two most noted among the Dutch, is one, a noble pile raised over the body of the Dutch Commissary, who died about three years ago, and another less stately, but more famed ; built by the order of a jovial Dutch commander, with three large punch-bowls upon the top of it, for the entertainment and mirth of his surviving friends, who remember him there sometimes so much, that they quite forget themselves."

Undeterred by this sinister display, Ovington accepted an invitation to remain at Surat as chaplain. The post was certainly an attractive one. Besides a salary of £100 a year—at least £500 in modern money—the chaplain was provided with food and lodging, a servant, the use of a coach and horses, and was accorded third rank in order of precedence in the factory. Moreover he could count on "many private gifts from merchants and masters of ships, who seldom fail of some valuable oblation, . . . or rarity of the place they come from" : besides a steady flow of "noble large gratuities" for officiating at marriages, baptisms, and the rather frequent burials.

But his two and a half years' stay at Surat was less agreeable than it might have been, for twice during this time<sup>2</sup> the English were imprisoned in their factory by the Indian governor of the city in retaliation for the seizure of Moghul ships by unidentified European pirates. Such acts of reprisal frequently shattered the stately gratifying routine of English life in India, and finally compelled the Company to establish itself as a territorial power. Native uprisings against the Moghul government were another and worse form of disturbance ; in 1664 a local Rajah<sup>3</sup> had invaded Surat and plundered all its inhabitants except the English and French merchants, who had defended themselves by force of arms.

Indeed India, in spite of all its wealth and luxury, its amazing diamonds and various precious stones of "splendour and esteem,"

<sup>1</sup> A slip for Sir George Oxenden.

<sup>2</sup> In 1691 and in 1692.

<sup>3</sup> Rajah Sivājī.

its glorious silks—atlasses, cuttanees, soofeys, culgars, allagars and taffaties, its gilded palanquins and pompous elephants and luscious pleasure gardens and dancing girls, was a miserable place to live in at this period. The Emperor Aurengzebe, while ruthlessly ruling his huge inherited domains, was engaged in a brutal struggle to extend his sway over southern India. His cruel armies were permanently on the march, crushing insurrections, extorting tribute, burning and pillaging towns, which were liable to be preyed upon by rebel Rajahs as soon as the imperial forces had departed. These continual conquests and reconquests reduced large areas of the country to bloody chaos, or as Ovington puts it, made “fear and distress, poverty and famine, the universal air and genius of those unquiet abodes.” In his personal life, Aurengzebe had a record of crime hardly exceeded by the most notorious rulers of Turkey and Persia; the Peacock Throne, blazing with diamonds and emeralds and topazes and pearls, was his reward for betraying and murdering all his nearest relatives. How much, observes Ovington, these infamous oriental tyrants could learn from the Chinese, whose emperors had ruled and conquered not by violence, but by the force of virtue! “And concerning Chinese history,” he writes, “’tis affirmed to us, that virtue alone formed that great empire, and that nothing concurred in its confirmation more than the virtuous lives of their emperors: in so much that forty-four kings, enamoured with the virtue of Venvam,<sup>1</sup> submitted to his laws. But few of the eastern kingdoms,” he sighs with reason, “are qualified for such a boast as this.”

Alas! China the great, the virtuous, the peaceful, had remained inaccessible. From the middle of the sixteenth century the Portuguese had been allowed to occupy the island of Macao, and later Jesuit missionaries had been received at the imperial court; but with these exceptions, Europeans had been excluded. Ever since the fall of the Mongul dynasty in the fourteenth century, the Chinese had kept to this policy of isolation. Convinced that theirs was the only civilisation in the world, they regarded China as the Universal State, ruled by the Son of Heaven. Foreigners might present themselves as tribute bearers, might beg the Son of Heaven, as the forty-four kings had begged Venvam, to incorporate their lands into his Celestial Kingdom, but they could never be admitted to the country as equals. Until the end of the seventeenth century no European merchants, except those few Portuguese at Macao, were allowed to trade in Chinese ports. China, being self-sufficient, had no need of their products, and moreover considered that foreign barbarians could contribute nothing in the way of luxuries or curiosities to a civilisation that was already perfect. So it happened that at a period when English merchants were doing business in every part of the world, when the great monopoly companies—the Muscovy

<sup>1</sup> Probably Woo Wang, first Emperor of the Chow dynasty, c. 1000 B.C.

Company, the Levant Company, the East India Company, the Royal African Company which dealt so profitably in slaves—were enriching England with noble families and imposing country houses, Cathay, the original subject of English enterprise, was almost as remote as it had been in the time of Chancellor and Jenkinson.

The first concession from China came in 1685, when the Emperor K'ang Hsi issued a Mandate giving foreigners leave to trade in Canton. But this arrangement did not afford the privileges, arranged by negotiation, such as English merchants enjoyed in other countries. Indeed the East India Company had to contend with a body of profiteering monopolists greedier than itself. The Hong merchants, who held the exclusive right of trading with foreigners, dictated their own terms, exacting exorbitant dues and bribes, and selling their goods at much above the current prices in China. The East India Company, however, were still able to sell Chinese luxuries in England at a high enough price to make this unfavourable trade worthwhile, and in the beginning of the eighteenth century obtained permission to build a factory in the suburbs of the city.<sup>1</sup> But again humiliating restrictions were imposed: the Company's employees were confined to the factory precincts all the time they were on shore, were not allowed to bring their wives with them, or even allowed to row for pleasure on the river.

This unsatisfactory state of affairs endured for more than a hundred years. During the eighteenth century, while the English, by a policy of war alternating with bribery and intrigue, forced their way into India, undermined the crumbling tyranny of the Moghul emperors and substituted British justice, they made no progress in China whatsoever. It is true that a British ambassador, Lord Macartney, was permitted to visit the Imperial court in Peking in 1793, and was graciously received by the Emperor; but all he brought back was an alluring account of the dignity, elegance, sophistication and beauty of the Celestial Kingdom, and not one concession to English demands. No one else was allowed to travel beyond Canton; China, revered by European philosophers and dilettanti, eyed covetously by European merchants, remained impenetrable. In 1811 it was actually easier to reach Lhasa, capital of Tibet, then a tributary of China,<sup>2</sup> than to enter China itself.

*Thomas Manning*<sup>3</sup>; *Journey to Lhasa*. (1811-12.)

Thomas Manning was one of those men occasionally and inexplic-

<sup>1</sup> In 1715.

<sup>2</sup> The Manchu Emperor K'ang Hsi brought Tibet under Chinese domination (see China), and the Chinese had political agents in the country from the early eighteenth century. After the Gurkha invasion of southern Tibet in 1788 the Chinese strengthened their hold on the country.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Manning (1772-1840.)

ably produced by England, who feel with instinctive passionate conviction that they belong to China. Unfortunately for him he was born in the late eighteenth century, when his life interest could only take the form of a dangerous and forbidden quest. After learning all that could be learnt of the Chinese language in Europe, he wangled permission to live in the factory of the East India Company at Canton. In this voluntary confinement he spent the three years from 1807 till 1810, minutely studying the speech, manners and customs of the country, in the hope that he might be able to travel there disguised as a Chinese. But there was no chance, he discovered, of entering the empire from Canton, and so in 1810 he went to Calcutta and approached the Governor General in Council with the scheme of travelling to China through Tibet.

Unfortunately he was one of those eccentrics who seldom recommend themselves to the official world. Moreover the only man who might have helped him—Warren Hastings—had been superseded. It had been the policy of Warren Hastings to open friendly relations with Tibet, and he had sent two envoys in the country, a Mr. Bogle in 1774, and a Lieutenant Turner in 1783. Both had been received by the Tashi Lama, the second authority in Tibet, but neither had succeeded in reaching Lhasa, the capital, or set eyes on the Dalai Lama, the supreme religious ruler who was regarded as the incarnation of Buddha.<sup>1</sup>

After the resignation of Warren Hastings this policy had been abandoned; the Chinese, having defeated a Gurkha invasion of southern Tibet in 1788, had tightened their control over the country, and closed the frontiers to all foreigners. In consequence, Manning could obtain no help or encouragement from the English government. He had to finance this tremendous journey from his own resources, and so poor was he when he reached Lhasa that he had no better presents to offer the Dalai Lama than a bottle of lavender water, and a pair of brass candlesticks which one of his Chinese servants had pilfered from the East India Company at Canton. It is hardly possible not to agree with Manning that these stolen goods were put to a "high and honourable use"; after all, he was the first of his countrymen to appear in Lhasa, and the Dalai Lama regarded him as a representative of the English crown.

Manning failed to reach China. During his five months' stay in Lhasa he gained the support and friendship of the Tibetan Lamas; but the Chinese officials were suspicious of him, at one moment his life seemed to be in danger, and in the end he was thankful when he was allowed to leave the country by the way he had come. On his return to Calcutta no official recognition was accorded him; indignant and disgusted, he left for Canton, refusing to tell anyone anything of his

<sup>1</sup> Tibet was then, as now, governed by priests of the Tantric sect of Buddhism.



experiences. The only full account of his journey, which he sent to a friend, Dr. Marsham, has most regrettably been lost; now no record remains of this unique adventure except his sketchy personal diary.

It may be, however, that this document gives a better picture of the country and the traveller than any more premeditated work could do. Manning jotted down his impressions spontaneously, with the freedom almost of automatic writing. His descriptions have that unblurred vividness which is only achieved by those who never try to write well or to appear consistent. All his reactions are exposed without self-consciousness: ill-humour, quirkish eccentricity, romantic sentiments characteristic of his period, pedantic judgments inherited from the previous century, shades of feeling that are Chinese rather than European. His contradictory character, kindly and bad-tempered, serene and petty, appears with startling, almost shocking clarity, as he describes himself exchanging ceremonious courtesies with Chinese officials, observing, fascinated, the joyful flight of birds, giving the local people medical treatment free of charge, complaining of his food and lodging, quarrelling, continually and bitterly, with his "Munshi," his Chinese servant.

He began his journey by crossing Bhutan, between India and Tibet, climbing into a bleak, remote, inhuman mountain world.

"Leaving Matakah on the 20th, we walked up a mountain, and slept upon it, there being no village or house. Wet, wet; always rain.

On the 21st., we ascended still higher; and after a fearfully long walk up the steep, descended down to Wharai—a toilsome day's work. I find going up hill does not agree with me, perhaps because naturally I am going down hill. Wet above, wet below; hard stones all the way."

.....

"This morning I went to salaam the petty magistrate of the place, and gave him a rupee and a looking-glass. He was vastly civil. The Chinaman is a cross as the devil, and will not speak. We are lodged in a loft, open shed-like, but a snuggish place to sleep in. Snowfall in sight. Charming weather. Strange sensation coming along: warm and comfortable. Horse walking in a lane between two walls. The snow! Where am I! How can I be come here? Not a soul to speak to. I wept almost through excess of sensation, not from grief. A spaniel would be better company than my Chinese servant. Plenty of priests and monks like those in Europe."

In Tibet he managed to attach himself to the party of a Chinese General travelling through the country, and so avoided the questions and obstructions of local officials. Day after day they rode through the same harsh, hopeless landscape, a landscape of stones and snow, frozen rivers and lakes, and empty mountains that were oppressively magnificent.

"We continued along the barren valley, seeing no diversity, but the ever-varying shapes of the still more barren mountains, whose colour, where it was not actually sand, slate, or granite, was a melancholy pale mouldy green, produced no doubt by the scaly covering of dried stems and withered herbage, . . .

"The next day the valley opened a little. A stream flowed in the middle. There were stumps of herbs and brown grass, but still not a single tree or shrub to be seen. I saw deer feeding in the distance. We made a very short stage, and put up at a sort of caravanserai which seemed to be destined to receive the mandarins and other public officers. Our room was a little sort of balcony open in the side towards the south. A cloth was stretched against the open side, which moderated the cold in the night."

. . . . .

"We then passed a strange strait between the mountains, where the water seemed to flow uphill. We went upon masses of stones for a long way; afterwards the road opened into a little area, filled with religious piles of white stones, and with a sort of open temple in it, where was carved a strange gigantic figure."

. . . . .

"Turning my head towards the west, I had a noble view of a set of snowy mountains collected into a focus, as it were; their summits empurpled with the evening sun, and their majestic, graceful forms ever varying as I advanced into new positions. Though I kept a long, long lingering eye upon them, yet I heartily wished that I might never see them again. My lips almost spontaneously pronounced this wish repeatedly, as I apostrophised them in my mind. Fruitless wish!"

. . . . .

At last, stopping for refreshment at a small town, he came within sight of Lhasa, a city crouching beneath the palace-fortress of the Dalai Lama, which rose, tier above tier, on the face of a rocky mountain. With his eighteenth-century partiality for symmetrical architecture, he disapproved of the irregular construction of the gateway to the city, but he was unable to deny that the palace, although according to his standards a formless heap of a building, made a stupendous effect:

"As soon as we were clear of the town, the palace of the Grand Lama presented itself to our view. It seemed close at hand, but taking an eye observation upon the change of certain angles as I advanced eighty or one hundred paces, I sagaciously informed my Munshi that it was still four or five miles off. As we approached, I perceived that under the palace on one side lay a considerable extent of marshy land. This brought to my mind the Pope, Rome, and what I had read of the Pontine Marshes. We passed under a large gateway whose gilded ornaments at the top were so ill fixed that some leaned one way

and some another, and reduced the whole to the rock appearance of castles and turrets in pastry work. The road here, as it winds past the palace, is royally broad ; it is level and free from stones, and combined with the view of the lofty towering palace, which forms a majestic mountain of a building, has a magnificent effect. The road about the palace swarmed with monks ; its nooks and angles with beggars lounging and basking in the sun. This again reminded me of what I have heard of Rome. My eye was almost perpetually fixed on the palace, and roving over its parts, the disposition of which being irregular, eluded my attempts at analysis. As a whole, it seemed perfect enough ; but I could not comprehend its plan in detail. Fifteen or twenty minutes brought us to the entrance of the town of Lhasa."

Although Manning had conventional ideas about architecture, he was not without the romantic sensibility of his period. The town itself, overshadowed by this seat of priestly power and learning, seemed to him phantasmagoric and macabre :

" If the palace had exceeded my expectations, the town as far fell short of them. There is nothing striking, nothing pleasing in its appearance. The habitations are begrimed with smut and dirt. The avenues are full of dogs, some growling and gnawing bits of hide which lie about in profusion, and emit a charnel-house smell ; others limping and looking livid ; others ulcerated ; others starving and dying, and pecked at by ravens ; some dead and preyed upon. In short, everything seems mean and gloomy, and excites the idea of something unreal. Even the mirth and laughter of the inhabitants I thought dreamy and ghostly. The dreaminess no doubt was in my mind, but I could never get rid of the idea ; it strengthened upon me afterwards."

When the time came for his audience with the Dalai Lama, he assembled, with some trepidation, his meagre offerings. Two pairs of " china ewers," which he had intended to decorate with artificial flowers, had been left behind at one of the stops on the journey ; he had nothing except a little Nankin tea, the bottle of lavender water, a small tribute of coins, and the East India Company's candlesticks, which he carefully cleaned and " furbished up." But the Dalai Lama turned out to be an enchantingly simple and gracious little boy :

" We rode to the foot of the mountain on which the palace is built, or out of which, rather, it seems to grow ; but having ascended a few paces to a platform, were obliged to dismount. From here to the hall where the Grand Lama receives is a long and tedious ascent. It consists of about four hundred steps, partly stone steps in the rocky mountain, and the rest ladder steps from story to story in the palace.

Besides this, from interval to interval along the mountain, wherever the ascent is easy, there are stretches interspersed, where the path continues for several paces together without steps. At length we arrived at the large platform roof, off which is built the house or hall of reception."

. . . . .

"I made the due obeisance, touching the ground three times with my head to the Grand Lama, and once to the Ti-mu-fu<sup>1</sup>. I presented my gifts, delivering the coin with a handsome silk scarf with my own hands into the hands of the Grand Lama and the Ti-mu-fu. While I was ketesing,<sup>2</sup> the awkward servants contrived to let fall and break the bottle of lavender water intended for the Ti-mu-fu. Of course, I seemed not to observe it, though the odoriferous stream flowed close to me, and I could not help seeing it with the corner of my eye as I bowed down my head. Having delivered the scarf to the Grand Lama, I took off my hat, and humbly gave him my clean-shaved head to lay his hands upon. The ceremony of presentation being over, Munshi and I sat down on two cushions not far from the Lama's throne, and had *suchi* brought to us. . . . The Lama's beautiful and interesting face and manner engrossed almost all my attention. He was at that time about seven years old: had the simple and unaffected manners of a well educated princely child. His face was, I thought, poetically and affectingly beautiful. He was of a gay and cheerful disposition; his beautiful mouth perpetually unbending into a graceful smile, which illuminated his whole countenance. Sometimes, particularly when he had looked at me, his smile almost approached to a gentle laugh. No doubt my grim beard and spectacles somewhat excited his risibility, though I have afterwards, at the New Year's festival, seen him smile and unbend freely, while sitting myself unobserved in a corner, and watching his reception of various persons, and the notice he took of the strange variety of surrounding objects."

Manning enjoyed a long conversation with him, which was carried on by a curiously roundabout but most satisfactory means. The Dalai Lama spoke to his interpreter in Tibetan, the interpreter to Manning's "Munshi" in Chinese, and the "Munshi" to Manning in Latin, which was the language in which these two could converse most freely. "Thus," observes Manning, "though the route was circuitous, the communication was quick, and the questions and answers delivered with an accuracy which I have reason to believe seldom

<sup>1</sup> The head magistrate of Tibet.

<sup>2</sup> Kow-towing—the Chinese custom of touching the ground with the forehead as an expression of respect. The refusal of English ambassadors to kow-tow to the Emperors of China was a cause of considerable trouble (see China). The eccentric Manning, however, actually liked kow-towing, and remarks that he did it on every possible occasion.



happens in Asia when interpreters are employed." No wonder he felt indignant that the English authorities had refused him official status! "What use," he exclaims, "are their embassies when their ambassadors cannot speak to a soul, and can only make ordinary phrases pass through a stupid interpreter? No *finesse*, no *tournure*, no compliments. Fools, fools, fools, to neglect an opportunity they may never have again!"

The meeting had been more successful than the travel-stained needy Englishman had dared to hope. "I was extremely affected," he admits, "by this interview with the Lama. I could have wept through strangeness of sensation." It is true that the Lama had politely shelved Manning's request for "books respecting his religion and ancient history"; but Manning does not seem to have minded very much. Indeed it is doubtful whether Manning realised what he was asking for: no less than the secret learning of Tantric or occult Buddhism, which could never be revealed to the uninitiated. Nowhere does he suggest that he appreciated the significance of religion in Tibet, or understood that this charming "princely child" was regarded as the incarnation of Buddha. His conversations with the Dalai Lama were always on a social level. While he stayed in Lhasa he was privileged with several audiences, and these happy occasions compensated for the disconcerting attitude of the Chinese officials.

From the day he entered the city he was surrounded by Chinese spies; an evil-natured Mandarin haunted his house, questioning his servant, prying into his daily life, waging, in fact, a tormenting war of nerves. His request for permission to proceed on his journey through China received only evasive replies; letters sent to the Emperor of China never seemed to be answered, and then there was a rumour that the Emperor had demanded his head. At last, thoroughly alarmed, he was thankful when he was given an opportunity of escaping back to India. But it was with deep regret that he took his leave of the Dalai Lama:

"April 6th. I took leave of the Grand Lama with a sorrowful heart. I said I would tell my king (Governor of Bengal) that I was well treated. His heart rejoices. I thank the Grand Lama, and promise that if afterwards a Lhasa man comes to Bengal it shall not be forgotten. I take leave of Tí-mu-fu. Sorrowful. Receive presents. Go to Tajín and Tay-ye but do not see them. Second Tajín gives me a scarf and a piece of stuff for a saddle carpet. Make up things. Rather sorrowful."

Four years after Manning's Tibetan journey he finally realised his wish of seeing China, when he joined Lord Amherst's embassy to the Emperor of China as interpreter. The ambassador, it is said, at first objected to his inclusion on account of his unseemly appearance,

but a compromise was reached when Manning agreed to wear European instead of his usual Chinese clothes, on condition that he was allowed to retain his beard. Manning must have had a wonderful view of the Celestial Kingdom during the long return journey overland from Peking to Canton; but no doubt he would rather have visited the country alone, poor and unprotected, as he had visited Tibet, than in such embarrassing company. Lord Amherst's mission was a mortifying failure: this none too skilful diplomat was tricked and mocked by the Chinese Mandarins, failed to see the Emperor, and was finally expelled from the country with a condescending letter to George III, in which the Son of Heaven addressed the King of England as a vassal, and intimated that his embassies were a waste of time and money. After this, no further effort could be made to negotiate with China by diplomatic means. British patience was exhausted; in 1839 the Opium War broke out, the Chinese were forced to throw open their ports, to cede Hong Kong and to abolish the monopoly of the Hong merchants. Had Manning lived a few years longer he might have been one of the few Englishmen to make good use of these concessions, to understand and appreciate the ancient civilisation that had at last become accessible.

During the nineteenth century the English merchants rapidly bullied their way into the Celestial Empire, followed by those of the other western powers: France, America, Germany, Belgium, Sweden. Western imperialism, which had begun long ago with the brave, ill-equipped individual adventures of Diaz, Columbus, Cabot, Magellan, Chancellor and Jenkinson, had now become an efficient, crushing, impersonal machine. All Africa was carved up between the European nations; the continent of Australia, the last of the great discoveries, became a British colony. By the beginning of the twentieth century almost every productive region of the world had come within the sphere of western enterprise; only the unprofitable patches—the jungles, the deserts, the polar regions—remained unexploited and unexplored. Discovery was no longer a means to wealth, but knowledge; the modern explorer is not a merchant, but a scientist, historian or archaeologist. Distinction, not riches and glory, is his reward; no longer the palladian mansion, the family portraits, the lands and servants and carriages, but a quiet country cottage, honours from learned societies, a notice in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Among the last geographical mysteries to be revealed were those routes that English travellers first attempted—the North-east and North-west Passages, and the overland route to Cathay. The Elizabethans had been handicapped by an excess of courage; instinctively they had applied themselves to the most difficult undertakings. Central Asia

remained unknown for three hundred years after Anthony Jenkinson's gallant but fruitless expedition, and only recently has it been fully explored.

*Sir Aurel Stein<sup>1</sup>; On Central Asian Tracks.*

One who did most to accomplish this task was Sir Aurel Stein, who during the first sixteen years of the present century made a series of journeys, on horseback and on foot, over the vast, high, lifeless region between the Oxus and western China, divided from Tibet in the south by the Kun Lun ranges, bounded on the north by the Tien Shan or Celestial Mountains. It was across these forbidding deserts that the Chinese, before they adopted their policy of seclusion in the fourteenth century, maintained a perilous, intermittent contact with the West. The route was open in the time of the Roman Empire, when silk was first brought to Europe; again in the T'ang Dynasty, in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D., when Chinese authority stretched far into western Asia; and once more, after an interval of some five hundred years, during the period of the Mongol domination, when Marco Polo and other European travellers visited Cathay, bringing home those tales of oriental splendour that so profoundly influenced the western mind.

These ancient caravan routes, finally abandoned after the fall of the Mongol empire, were retraced by Sir Aurel Stein with patient enduring scholarly devotion. The desert sand had preserved, amazingly undamaged, relics of the various communities that had formerly existed in these inhospitable but commercially important regions. Chinese forts, Buddhist shrines, documents engraved on wood, carved furniture, pottery, woollen rugs, even the trellis poles of vineyards were unearthed in the course of his archæological researches.

Digging in a sand-buried settlement near the Niya river, he came upon many objects of daily life, and the actual leaves of a garden, belonging to the first centuries of the Christian era:

"The other large residence farther to the south-west also yielded plenty of curious relics. In a room which seems to have served as an office there were found besides inscribed tablets of varying shape blank wooden stationery, writing pens of tamarisk wood, and eating sticks such as are still used by the Chinese. More interesting still were the well preserved upper portion of a guitar found in a passage and the remains of an elaborately carved armchair. Its legs represent standing lions and the arm-rests composite monsters of a Hellenistic type, all retaining their original vivid colouring.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Aurel Stein, K.C.I.E. (1862-1943) archæologist and explorer. He continued travelling until he was over eighty and died at Kabul, in Afghanistan.

"The arrangement of an arbour close by could be traced with great clearness. The trunks of the poplars still rising eight to ten feet above the ground were seen grouped in small squares and enclosing avenues, just as they can be found now in every "Bostan" or arbour from Kashgar to Keriya. It was with a strange feeling, obliterating almost all sense of time, that I walked between two parallel rush fences that still form a little country lane just as they did nearly seventeen centuries ago. Searching in the sand at the bottom of the fences, my stick disclosed the rustling dead leaves of poplars and fruit trees. Among the fallen trunks of ancient trees such as I saw here and at other points of the site, my diggers easily distinguished white poplars once planted along lanes, as well as various fruit trees, such as the peach, apple, plum, apricot, mulberry, the wood of which they knew from their own homes."

Most fascinating of his finds were the many examples of Græco-Buddhist art scattered all over these vast deserts: that strange synthesis of Mediterranean, Indian and Chinese cultures that evolved during the early centuries of the Christian era, when Central Asia was the great thoroughfare of the world, when Chinese silk was regularly exported to the Roman Empire, when Chinese embassies were sent to Parthia and the Persian Gulf, and Buddhist pilgrims journeyed overland between India and China. During his travels Sir Aurel Stein was inspired, and sometimes actually geographically guided, by the memoirs of his patron saint, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsuang-tsang, who in the seventh century returned to China, after many years wandering in India, across the deserts of Central Asia. He should be thanked for the most romantic of Sir Aurel Stein's discoveries, the Græco-Buddhist paintings which he found hidden in the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas.

These are sacred caves, carved out of a precipitous cliff near Tun-huang, in Kansu, the far western province of China. Some are small bare cavities, ancient hermitages, "like troglodyte dwellings of anchorites retired to a distant Thebais"; others shrines filled with Buddhist statues and frescoes:

"Farther up there were to be seen hundreds of grottoes, large and small, honeycombing in irregular tiers the sombre rock faces, from the foot of the cliffs to the top of the precipice, and extending in close array for over half a mile. This bewildering multitude of grottoes all showed paintings on their walls or on as much as was visible of them from outside. Among them two shrines containing colossal Buddha statues could at once be recognised; for in order to secure adequate space for the giant stucco images of the Buddhas, close on ninety feet high, a number of halls had been excavated one



above the other, each providing light and access for a portion of the colossus."

It was easy enough for him to enter the caves ; but his investigations had to be conducted with extreme discretion, for these rock temples consecrated in the fourth century A.D. were still living holy places, the scene of a religious fair that attracted thousands of worshippers from the surrounding villages. A local rumour that a huge quantity of ancient manuscripts existed walled up in one of the shrines excited his curiosity ; but it was impossible for him to see them without the consent of their guardian, an ignorant but pious Taoist priest who had walled them in, and for many years had spent all he could beg on restoring the shrine with crude paintings and statues. His refusal to disclose the treasures seemed insuperable, until Aurel Stein, observing that many of the new paintings represented the legendary adventures of Hsuang-tsang, discovered that he too was an ardent admirer of his own patron saint :

"There was visible proof of the priest's devotion to the great pilgrim's memory in the pictures with which he caused the new loggia facing the cave temple to be decorated. They illustrated quaintly enough these fantastic legends which have transformed my Chinese patron saint in popular Chinese belief into a kind of Munchausen.<sup>1</sup> It is true that they are not found in the genuine memoirs and biography of Hsuang-tsang. But why should this little difference matter ? The priest was obviously impressed by what in my poor Chinese I could tell him of my own devotion to the great pilgrim, and how I had followed his footsteps from India across the inhospitable mountains and deserts."

He eventually induced the priest to show him, though in secrecy of night, a few Chinese manuscripts from the hidden store. At this crucial moment Hsuang-tsang once again came to his aid. By an accident that seemed like the miraculous intervention of the pilgrim saint, the manuscripts that the priest had selected at random were found to contain Chinese versions of certain canonical Buddhist texts, which—so it was stated in the colophons—Hsuang-tsang himself had brought from India and translated. This apparently supernatural mediation finally broke down the scruples and suspicions of the priest : he opened the wall, and revealed to the amazed explorer a priceless hoard of Chinese Buddhist texts dating from the fifth century, Tibetan manuscripts, and,

<sup>1</sup> Fantastic legends concerning Hsuang-tsang are the subject of the enchanting book *Monkey*, written by Wu Ch'êng-ên in the sixteenth century, and delightfully translated by Arthur Waley. In this book the character called Tripitaka is a parodied Hsuang-tsang.

most wonderful of all, a collection of superb Græco-Buddhist paintings of the T'ang dynasty.

"Under the influence of this quasi-divine hint the priest summoned up courage that morning to open before me the rough door closing the entrance to the rock-carved recess where the great trove had lain hidden. The sight disclosed in the dim light of the priest's oil-lamp made my eyes open wide. Heaped up in layers, but without any order, there appeared a solid mass of manuscript bundles rising to ten feet from the floor and filling, as subsequent measurements showed, close on five hundred cubic feet.

"Already the search of those first hours carried on in a state of joyful excitement showed how varied were the remains awaiting here excavation of a novel kind. As bundle after bundle was brought out by the priest to be opened by us with an eagerness which it was hard to disguise, there emerged also in plenty Tibetan manuscripts, long rolls as well as whole packets, both belonging to the huge Buddhist canon of Tibet. . . . But even more grateful I felt for the protection afforded by this strange place of deposit when, on opening a large packet, carelessly wrapped in a discoloured sheet of stout canvas, I found in it paintings mostly on fine gauze-like silk or else on linen. . . . Most of the paintings first found were narrow pictures from two to three feet in length. By their triangular tops and floating streamers they could at once be recognised as having been intended for temple banners. When unfurled, these silk banners showed beautifully painted figures of Buddhist divinities, retaining their harmonious colours in perfect freshness."

This happened in 1907, at a period when the Chinese government, far gone in the disintegration that preceded the revolution, had no interest in preserving the antiquities of the remote districts of the empire. Sir Aurel Stein persuaded the priest to sell the store quite easily, and thus was able, in his own words, "to rescue for western scholarship all those relics of ancient Buddhist literature and art which were otherwise bound to get lost sooner or later through local indifference." Would that the motives of other European travellers had been equally civilised and disinterested! Some sixteen months later, the twenty-nine cases containing these manuscripts and paintings reached the British Museum, bringing to England one of the real treasures of the orient, of the kind that Englishmen had for three centuries usually overlooked and ignored.



## 5. CHINA

IT WAS the quest for China—for Cathay—that first lured Europeans over the oceans surrounding them, that inspired their fruitless Arctic voyages and led to their discovery of the world ; yet China itself was one of the last countries with which they became acquainted. After the fall of the Mongol empire the Chinese under the Ming dynasty adopted a policy of seclusion, and in spite of the persistent pressure of the western mercantile nations, this was maintained almost unmodified until the nineteenth century. In the middle of the sixteenth century the Portuguese were allowed to settle on the island of Macao ; later Jesuit missionaries were admitted to Peking, and at the end of the seventeenth century European traders were given leave to do business in Canton. But these were small concessions ; until the time of the Opium Wars,<sup>1</sup> the vast land of China, the empire great in riches and virtue, remained inaccessible and unknown.

So it happened that at the beginning of the seventeenth century, at a time when Englishmen had made their way over the Atlantic and the Pacific, round Africa and across the Indian Ocean, had opened trade with the East Indies and claimed possessions in the New World, China was as much a mystery to them as it had always been. Explorers, merchants and colonists had brought home authentic accounts of the Arctic midnight sun, the giant forests of Virginia, the savages of California, African negroes, Indian jewels, the white elephants of the King of Burma, but the only English account of China was contained in the half-legendary, phantasmagoric fourteenth-century *Travels* of Sir John Mandeville.

### *Sir John Mandeville ; Travels.*

That Mandeville's *Travels* became, on its appearance in the late fourteenth century, one of the most popular books in Europe, is easy to understand. His picture of the world, created out of the lurid clouds of mediæval occultism, myth, rumour and superstition, is dramatic enough to satisfy the unbridled demands of human imagination. Seventeenth-century travellers endeavoured to supply this natural craving for marvels by their observation of natural phenomena : earthquakes and volcanoes, icebergs and phosphorescent seas ; but the wonders of nature are drab compared with those of Mandeville. There is the

<sup>1</sup> 1839-42.

daughter of Ypocras who inhabits the Mediterranean island of Lango in the form of a dragon; Mount Ararat, on the summit of which Noah's ark can still be seen "from afar off in clear weather"; the kingdom of Abchaz, near Georgia, covered in impenetrable darkness, from which travellers can hear the sound of voices and of cocks crowing; a lake full of pearls and precious stones, made of the tears of Adam and Eve when they were driven out of Paradise. There are Ethiopians with only one foot, but that so large that when they lie down they can use it as an umbrella; in the East Indies, huge snails with shells that can be converted into human dwellings; fruits which turn into birds; headless men with eyes in their shoulders; men with horses' hooves, with dogs' ears, with ears hanging to their knees, and, surely the most appealing of those human monsters, the people of the isle of Tracadon, who live savagely in caves, eating only the flesh of serpents: "And they speak nought, but they hiss as serpents do. And they set no price by no avoir ne riches but only of a precious stone, that is amongst them, that is of sixty colours. . . . And they love more that stone than anything else, and yet they know not the virtue thereof, and they covet and love it for their (its) beauty."

The author of this wild fantasy describes himself as an Englishman, born at St. Albans, who left home in 1322, travelled through Europe to Turkey and Syria, and from thence overland to Cathay. Modern research, however, has proved that this is as fictitious as the rest, that the author is more likely to have been French than English, that he took his name from a real Sir John Mandeville who lived in the reign of Edward II, and compiled his book from the works of other writers. Indeed, he may never have travelled at all. It is true that certain passages stand out amid his extravagant fabrications as startlingly realistic, but these are found to have been appropriated from the reports of earlier travellers. The description of Cathay, for instance, which is substantially accurate, is largely taken from the journal of Friar Odoric de Pordonone, a missionary who visited the Mongol court in Peking early in the fourteenth century. Thus English travel literature includes an account, at secondhand and slightly distorted by the radiance of Mandeville's imagination, of the Chinese capital in the days of the Mongol dynasty.<sup>1</sup>

This Mongol court was far from barbaric. Chinese civilisation was an influence powerful enough to subdue the formidable ferocity of these nomad conquerors. Kubilai Khan, who had moved the capital of his empire to Peking and conquered southern China, had patronised Chinese culture, welcomed European missionaries, and lived in a splendour unparalleled at the period. Although Chinese learning and knowledge of philosophy were neglected, drama, and the art of creating gorgeous spectacles, flourished as never before; and if, according to

<sup>1</sup> The Yuan dynasty, A.D. 1280-1368.



Chinese standards, the Mongol rulers were remarkable for wealth and vulgar ostentation rather than true culture, the magnificence and artificiality of their court far surpassed anything to be seen in Europe.

In the great hall of his palace, with its twenty-four pillars of gold, the Emperor sat on a jewelled throne, surrounded by his wives and female relatives :

"And the hall of the palace is full nobly arrayed, and full marvelously attired on all parts in all things that man apparel with any hall. And first, at the chief of the hall is the Emperor's throne, full high, where he sitteth at the meat. And that is of fine precious stones, bordered all about with pured gold and precious stones, and great pearls. And the grees<sup>1</sup> that he goeth up to the table be of stones mingled with gold."

He was always attended by three of his wives, seated on the steps below him, one above another in order of precedence, on thrones of jasper bordered with gold.

"And after his wives, on the same side, sit the ladies of his lineage yet lower, after that they be of estate. And all those that be married have a counterfeit like a man's foot upon their heads, a cubit long, all wrought with great pearls, fine and orient, and above made with peacocks feathers and other shining feathers ; and that stands upon their heads like a crest, in token that they be under man's foot and under subjection of man. And they that be unmarried have none such. . . .

"And the Emperor hath his table alone by himself, that is of gold and precious stones, or of crystal bordered with gold, and full of precious stones, or of amethysts, or of lignum aloes that cometh out of paradise, or of ivory bordered with gold. . . .

"And under the Emperor's table sit four clerks that write all the Emperor saith, be it good, be it evil ; for all that he saith must be holden, for he may not change his word, ne revoke it."

Mechanical skill was so much superior to that of Europe as to seem magical, and the Mongol Emperors diverted themselves with jewelled counterfeits of nature which would have been envied by the princes of Italy three centuries later :

"And (at) great solemn feasts before the Emperor's table men bring great tables of gold, and thereon be peacocks of gold and many other manner of diverse fowls, all of gold and richly wrought and enamelled. And men make them dance and sing, clapping their wings together, and make great noise. And whether it be by craft or by necromancy I wot never ; but it is a good sight to behold, and a fair ; and it is a great

<sup>1</sup> grees : steps.

marvel how it may be. But I have the less marvel, because that they be the most subtle men in all sciences and in all crafts that be in the world ; for of all subtlety and of malice and of farcasting<sup>1</sup> they pass all men under heaven. And therefore they say themselves, that they see with two eyes and the Christian men see but with one, because they be more subtle than they. . . .

"Also above the Emperor's table and the other tables, and above a great part of the hall, is a vine made of fine grapes. And it spreadeth all about the hall. And it hath many clusters of grapes, some white, some green, some yellow and some red and some black, all of precious stones. The white be of crystal and of beryl and of iris ; the yellow be of topazes ; the red be of rubies and of grenaz and of alabrandines ; the green be of emeralds, of perydoz and of crysolites ; and the black be of onyx and garantez. And they be all so properly made that it seemeth a very vine bearing kindly grapes."

No Englishman was to see the wonders of the Chinese court until more than four centuries later. The East India Company, during the first hundred years of its existence, concentrated on India, leaving the Portuguese at Macao in undisputed possession of the China trade. Until the end of the seventeenth century, when foreign merchants were admitted to Canton, the English made only one attempt to open relations with China, and this was a discreditable bungle.

In 1635 Charles I, finding himself short of money, authorised the Courteen Association, in which he had taken shares, to settle new centres of trade in the East, in defiance of the monopoly already granted to the East India Company. The chief intention of these interlopers was to trade with China. The Chinese had given no indication that they wished to trade with any European nation other than the Portuguese, but none the less, the English had recently signed a convention with the Viceroy of Goa, by which the Portuguese gave them leave to compete in the China trade. The East India Company, however, had not immediately taken advantage of this agreement, and it was thought that the Courteen Association would be able to do so before the Company had time to object.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly in 1636 the Courteen Association despatched a fleet of ships, flying the King's colours, under the command of a high-handed, hot-headed adventurer called Captain Weddell. The story of this questionable enterprise, which infuriated both the East India Company and the Portuguese, and confirmed the Chinese in their belief that

<sup>1</sup> farcasting : augury.

<sup>2</sup> One ship of the East India Company, the *London*, had been sent in 1635, but had returned without doing any trade.

western traders were no better than pirates, has been made memorable by the journal of Peter Mundy, one of the most attractive of the many admirable travel writers of the seventeenth century.

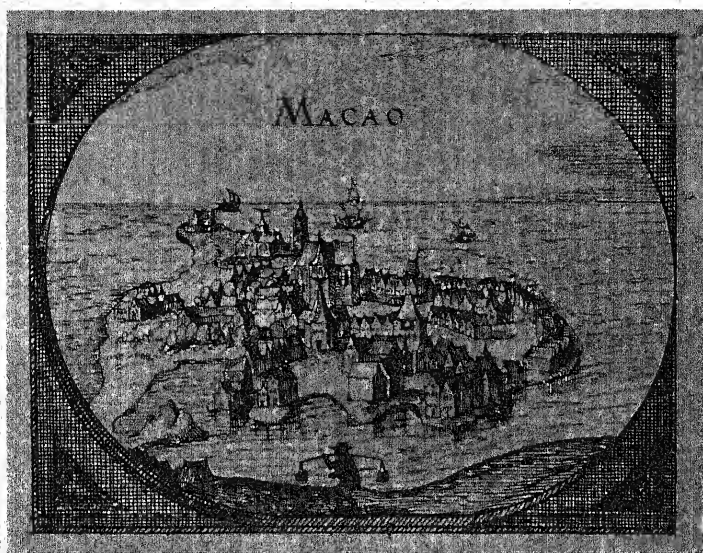
*Peter Mundy<sup>1</sup>; Travels.*

It is rare to find a man so representative of his period as was Peter Mundy. In an age when curiosity was the outstanding characteristic of intelligent Englishmen, curiosity was the ruling passion of this life. By profession he was a trader; but his purpose in pursuing this career was less to make money than to see the world—that amazing world that Englishmen had recently discovered; to know its animals and plants and mountains and rivers and oceans, its people, their clothes and languages and buildings and religions. During fifty years he was almost continuously on the move, travelling all over Europe, round Africa, across India, to China and back. His insatiable appetite for information, his eye for detail, his desire for accuracy, would have made him in modern times a first-rate scientist. His journal, illustrated with rough but vivid drawings, records the vast variety of subjects that commanded his attention: churches in Archangel, the amphitheatre at Verona, water mills at Belgrade, Hindu gods, Akbar's tomb, fishes at Madagascar, the bagworm, the weaver bird, "pretty oranges," "monstrous scallop shells," "monkeys with square broad bushy beards," a rock on Mauritius—"a wondrous monument"—known as Peter Butt's Head, "a strange creature"—actually a southern elephant seal—found at St. Helena with the "terrible countenance of a lion," a whale found in the Thames.

True to his period, also, was his heartlessness; like Evelyn, like George Sandys, and other seventeenth-century travellers, he was more interested in the appearances of things than their implications in the lives of human beings. Tortures and entertainments were to him equally welcome objects of inquiry; having described in nasty detail the Turkish punishments of "staking," "gaunching" and "drubbing," he obligingly remarks: "To divert your thoughts from those most cruel and torturing punishments, I will digress to some of their pastimes," and supplies elaborate drawings of both.

But if he was unfeeling, he was by no means insensitive; each strange item in the surprising world he had inherited is described with a spontaneous brilliance seldom to be found in modern writing. Our familiar experiences were to him fascinatingly extraordinary; riding an elephant,

<sup>1</sup>*Peter Mundy* (c. 1596-1667) was born at Penryn: his father was engaged in "the pilchard business." At the age of twelve he was sent to France to learn French. Three years later he went to sea, and between 1615 and 1656 he never spent longer than three consecutive years in England. His delightful journal has been edited by the Hakluyt Society.



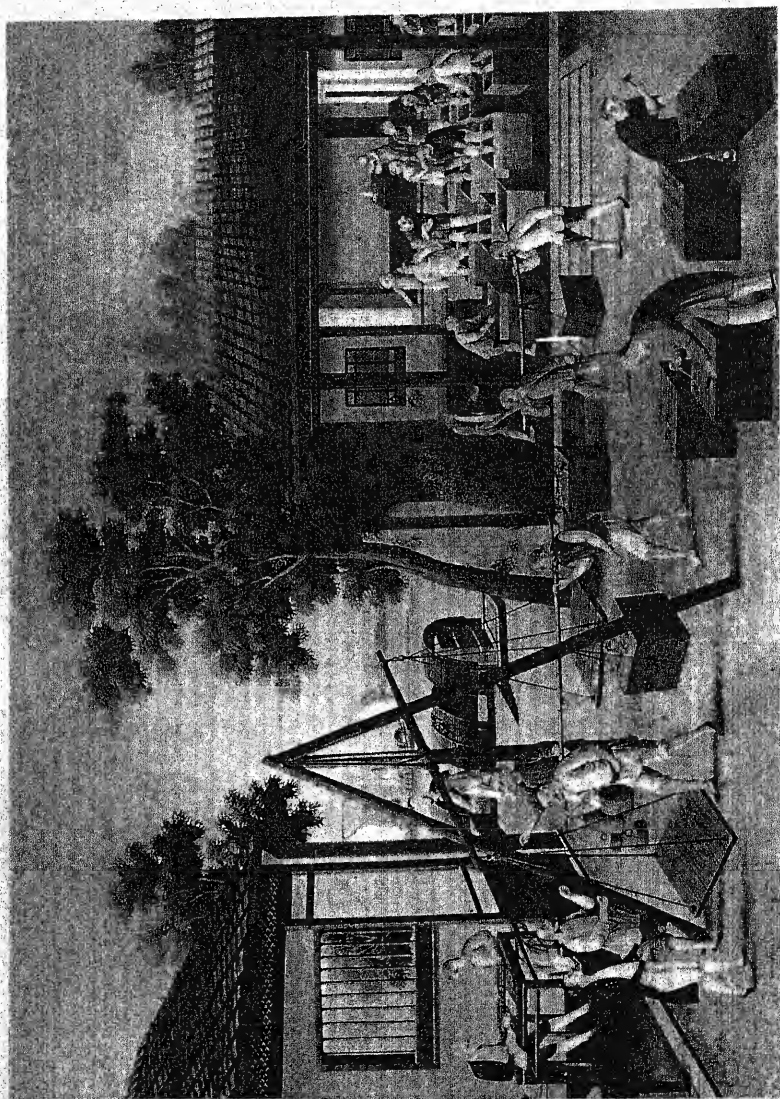
Macao in the early seventeenth century.



A Chinese eating with chopsticks.  
*From drawings by Peter Mundy.*



PLATE XVIII



Warehouse of European tea merchants in Canton.  
*From a Chinese water colour given by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung to Lord Macartney. In the A. Bahr collection.*

for instance, the common treat of every schoolchild today, is recorded with boisterous astonishment :

“ Riding on elephants hard to some.

Having our demands granted and licensed to depart, we returned the same way and in the same manner as we came, and all three got up on our elephant which brought us hither. For my own part I found (it) very uneasy riding, being badly seated and not accustomed (he had such a shuffling, jogging justling pace), sitting hindmost on the ridge of his monstrous massy chine bones, and nothing at all under me (nor they neither) that I wished myself on foot and would have let myself fall off but that it was somewhat too high. In fine, we alighted off from his back into the upper galleries of the house and saved the labour going upstairs.”

When Mundy, at the age of about forty, sailed to the East in the employment of Captain Weddell, he had already travelled overland from Constantinople to London, and had returned only a year before from an expedition in the service of the East India Company which had involved him in caravan journeys from Surat to Agra and Agra to Patna during a time of famine. Resting in England, however, had soon palled on him ; visits to see the “ rarities ” of the traveller John Tredecant,<sup>1</sup> his collection of “ beasts, fowl, fishes, serpents, worms (real, although dead and dried),” and Sir Henry Moody’s “ divers conceits,” which included a camera obscura,<sup>2</sup> had only whetted his appetite for exotic adventures. On making inquiries he had heard of “ two good businesses on foot ” ; a voyage of the East India Company to India, and an “ unknown design ” of the Courteen Association. It was natural that Mundy should have chosen the unknown design, which was Weddell’s expedition.

Weddell had orders to sail first to Goa, where he was to call on the Viceroy, remind him of the recent convention, and claim his support in approaching the Portuguese at Macao. But he arrived to find that the Viceroy who had signed the convention had been superseded, and that his successor, who disapproved of it, would do little to help him.

During these unsatisfactory negotiations, which lasted more than three months, Mundy had ample time to view this splendid but languishing city, capital of the Portuguese eastern empire for more than a century. Goa had fallen into decadence even before the English and Dutch had come into the Indian Ocean ; the colonial Portuguese, depraved by oriental luxury, had been no match for these vigorous

<sup>1</sup> Tredecant’s house, containing his collection, which was in the South Lambeth Road, was known as “ The Ark.” In 1662 the younger Tredecant bequeathed the collection to his friend Elias Ashmole, and in 1682 the Ashmolean Museum was built by the University of Oxford to house it.

<sup>2</sup> The first work to be printed in England on the subject of the Camera Obscura was Wilman Molyneux’s *Dioptrica Nova*, published 1692.

competitors. In former times, wrote Mundy, the Portuguese had "triumphed like petty Romans, bestowing their wealth in building churches, fair dwelling houses in the city and country, in rich furniture, planting gardens, etc., spending their time in pleasure, ease and recreation. Nobody then to disturb them. But those days are passed and their prosperous estate much abated by the coming in of the English and the Dutch, who began to traffic here about forty years since, and likely to be yearly worse and worse with them."

But though impoverished, they still had their feasts with "music of voices, accompanied with the harp and Spanish gittern," their sumptuous baroque churches, and their gardens, "replenished with multitudes of tall spreading and always flourishing fruit trees." "Festival shows," pageants and religious processions with music and "antic dances" were frequent; the feast day of St. Francis Xavier, whose body lay in a silver tomb in the church of Bom Jesus, was celebrated with "much good music, and at night pretty artificial fireworks," and on this occasion the churches were "set with multitudes of lamps in such order on the outsides that it made a delightful shew afar off in the dark night."

Weddell was finally forced to leave without any letter of recommendation to the Portuguese at Macao. Sailing south, he landed at Bhatkal, where he had hopes of trade. Mundy and a certain Thomas Robinson were sent inland to the court of the local king to solicit concessions, travelling through a country which "resembled England for the lovely, lowly round rising hills." Their requests were granted, and Weddell, undeterred by the unhealthiness of this coast—"near upon fourscore" had died while the fleet was anchored there—left a party of men to start a new factory.

Rounding Cape Comorin, which Mundy describes as very high and "ragged" land, with a peak of rock "resembling Paul's steeple, but I think four times as high,"<sup>1</sup> they passed Ceylon, where he observed "a very high hill far within land, resembling somewhat the crown of our now new fashion hats." They next landed at Achin, in Sumatra, where Lancaster and his crew, more than thirty years earlier, had sung psalms with the reigning monarch and his court. Here they established another factory, and witnessed the processions, sacrifices and elephant fights performed in honour of the newly-crowned king who granted them this concession. At Malacca they stopped a few days, to procure a pilot and provisions. They then safely negotiated the difficult passage of the Straits of Sincapura,<sup>2</sup> where the "little isles" were "like so many haycocks laid

<sup>1</sup> The Gothic steeple of the old St. Paul's before it was burnt down.

<sup>2</sup> The Straits of Singapore. The ruins of the ancient city of Sincapura stood on the derelict swampy island which was purchased by Stamford Raffles in 1819 from the Sultan of Johore and became the great British naval and commercial base Singapore.

close together, all overgrown with trees," made an uneventful voyage across the Gulf of Siam and the China Sea, and at last, some six months after leaving England, anchored off Macao.

Mundy, who throughout the expedition was entrusted with important and delicate tasks, was one of the party sent ashore to deliver the letter from Charles I claiming Portuguese assistance. Unfortunately the reaction of the Captain General of Macao was no more satisfactory than that of the Viceroy of Goa. He had no instructions, he wrote back to Weddell, either from Goa or from Spain, to serve the English fleet. Moreover he could hardly afford to welcome it; the position of the Portuguese was precarious, and the Chinese, on whose goodwill they depended, were strongly opposed to any other European ships trading at Canton.

This was in fact perfectly true; but the Englishmen, unable to comprehend the Chinese distaste for foreign traders, disbelieved everything the Portuguese told them, attributing their attitude to jealousy. "I conceive," writes Mundy, "they keep the main cause of all to themselves, which was that our coming in would quickly eat them out of all trade." He had yet to learn how difficult it was for anyone to trade with the Chinese.

After two weeks of fruitless discussion, Weddell, never remarkable for patience, took matters into his own hands by sending his pinnace up the river to make contact with the Chinese officials. Meanwhile some Mandarins from Canton arrived to investigate the English fleet; according to Mundy "they came in a big vessel with a kettle drum and a broad brass pan, on both of which they beat, keeping time together," and their ship was decked with "flags and streamers."

Nothing was effected at this meeting, but a few days later the Englishmen in the pinnace returned with the news that although they had not been allowed to proceed to Canton, the Chinese had informed them "in friendly manner" that if they wanted to trade they should send a petition through the local authorities at Macao. Thus encouraged, Weddell again asked the Portuguese to address the Chinese on his behalf, only to meet with the same refusal as before. Convinced that only Portuguese jealousy lay between him and a profitable trade, he finally broke off negotiations and determined to sail to Canton himself.

What followed can best be described in the paragraph headings of Peter Mundy's journal:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| " 29th July. | Our departure from our old road.  |
| 1st August.  | The Chinois desire us to anchor and to go no farther, we proceed onwards. |
| 4th August.  | Another fleet of junks, by whom we are again desired to go no farther.    |



- 8th August.      Anchored at Fumaon : Bad signs of obtaining trade with the Chinois also.
- 9th August.      The Chinois fortify against us, and we make preparations for defence and offence."

What happened was this. The local Chinese officials, who had standing orders that no foreign ships should enter the Canton river, had tried to dispose of Weddell by asking him to wait until advice should be received from the city, which, so they assured him, was likely to be favourable to his designs. Weddell, distrusting, with good reason, these vague promises, had ignored their requests and sailed as far as the entrance to the river, which was fortified. He had then observed that the Chinese were making warlike preparations at the Anung-hoi fort, near which he was anchored. The fort appeared dilapidated, and Weddell, who had been too long irritated by delays and prevarications, welcomed the chance of a fight. Without more ado he had prepared his ships for battle, flying the "bloody ensign," the flag of defiance, the signal to engage and give no quarter.

Alarmed by this menacing sign, the Chinese hastened to send an envoy, who prevailed upon Weddell to wait another six days for the promised news from Canton. During this interval Mundy, with some others, was several times sent ashore, bearing a white flag, to buy provisions. His journal gives a pleasing picture of the happy relations which might have existed between the English and the Chinese common people but for the contending policies of their rulers. The inhabitants of the poor riverside villages received the Englishmen with amiable astonishment, sold them what they had, and gave to them a strange drink, which was tea, then unknown in England.<sup>1</sup> "It must be drunk warm," notes Mundy, "and is accompted wholesome." He visited a pagoda, which he thought a "reasonable handsome building," was amused by the sight of the snakes and dogs sold as meat in the markets, and formed a general opinion of the country which he sums up under the heading: "Good land and habitation."

On one occasion he and his companions were invited to a religious celebration, followed by a feast, in a curious pagoda built of "large oyster shells":

"As we returned toward our boat, some Chinois were going to their pagode to do their superstition and to feast, it being the morrow of the new moon, and invited us along with them by clapping their forefinger on one side of their nose, which as I was told is used sometimes as a familiar way of invitation to eat, drink and be merry."

After the ceremonies a meal of chopped chicken and pork was

<sup>1</sup> Tea was not drunk in England until the middle of the seventeenth century, and then only as a luxury by the very rich.

provided, accompanied by warm arrack—some form of spirits or wine. Although the Englishmen were unable to handle their chopsticks, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, for their hosts turned out to be jovial and easy-going; in the words of Mundy: "They eat very often and are great drinkers, festival, frolic and free as far as (we) saw."

But this merry fraternisation was not to continue. When, a few days later, Weddell sent his barge to take soundings farther up the river, the Chinese fired on her from the fort. Here was sufficient provocation for the battle which Weddell had been all along itching to begin. He assembled the whole company, and it was decided to attack; in his own words: "We were all of opinion to lay our ships as near the walls of the castle as we could well come, and to batter it about their ears." This was accomplished without difficulty. After some firing on both sides, the Chinese, whose gunnery was ridiculously bad, began to run away; an assault party from the English ships landed, captured the fort, raised the King's colours, defaced the battlements, and set fire to the buildings inside.

Their booty, however was nothing better than thirty-five cannon, and "some planks, etc."

The exploit had been absurdly easy. Mundy, with characteristic cool detachment, remarks that it was worth describing only because it was so neatly carried out, and because it was a new experience:

"I have set down the taking of this platform somewhat largely, because it was so orderly done and the first skirmish that I yet ever saw myself in by land or sea, this act rather showing the manner than deserving the name of the taking of a fort, it being no great danger, difficulty or resistance."

The result of this incident was that the Canton authorities at last sent an envoy to Weddell, a minor official who spoke Portuguese, a certain Pablo Norette, who had once been employed at Macao, where he had been converted to Christianity and baptized with this name. Norette assured Weddell that his requests for trade would be granted if he restored the cannon looted from the fort. Weddell at once agreed to this condition, and when it had been carried out Norette returned to Canton, taking with him two Englishmen who were to present Weddell's petition to the proper authorities. He brought them back a few days later, with a letter from the Military Commander, who had given them audience. This letter, which Norette translated, seemed to Weddell most satisfactory. He understood that his requests for trade were granted, and that Norette had been authorised to give him every possible assistance. Accordingly he sent three English merchants back to Canton with Norette, who promised to procure for them whatever goods they might require, such as gold, musk, raw silk, sugar, porcelain, and green ginger.

Weddell was not to know that Norette was an unscrupulous racketeer, one of the many corrupt officials of the decadent Ming bureaucracy; that he had smuggled the English merchants into Canton, without the knowledge of his superiors, with the object of making some private profit out of their transactions, and that he had mistranslated the letter from the Military Commander. The letter, as Weddell later discovered, said the exact opposite of what Norette had pretended: the English requests for trade were flatly refused, and "the red haired barbarians" were ordered, in contemptuous terms, to put to sea immediately. "For you have shown great daring," the letter concluded, "in attempting to trade by force with us, we having forbidden it; and in doing so you appear to me to be like puppies and goats that have no learning and no reason." The Chinese, in short, had classed Weddell as a tiresome pirate.

Weddell, of course, had no suspicion of the real situation. About a week after his merchants had left, goods duly began to arrive from Canton, together with assurances from Norette that he would have full cargoes within a month. When he received a letter from the Captain General of Macao, warning him, politely but firmly, that he was breaking Chinese law, and protesting that his behaviour would bring reprisals on the Portuguese colony, he regarded it as an unjustifiable display of jealousy. His reply was written with a truculent indignation which he was later to have reason to regret: "Having received your offensive letters, accompanied by a formal but unimportant protest, we were much astonished to find that you consider us so despicable and of no importance, since you appear to think that your letters, full of groundless threats, will induce us to abandon an undertaking so profitable and so certain. For which, though we pay no heed to your threats, we shall fight your people with blood and sweat to the end. This land, as you yourself acknowledge, is not yours, but the King of China's. Why then should we wait for licence from the King of Castille<sup>1</sup> or his petty Viceroy in these parts? We have no leisure at present, because of other occupations, to answer your vulgar letters at more length."

At this moment, when he thought himself so prosperous and secure, and event occurred that almost ended him and his enterprise. On a moonless night, fireboats—large junks, "all in flaming fire chained one to the other" came drifting down the river on to the English fleet. This dramatic surprise attack threw everyone into consternation, and it seemed to Mundy a miracle that the ships escaped unharmed:

"The fire was vehement. Balls of wild fire, rockets and fire-arrows flew thick as they passed by us, but God be praised, not one of us all was touched.

<sup>1</sup> Portugal was under the Spanish crown from 1580 to 1640. (See Asia.)

"Great and sudden was the amazement and affright at such a time of night (it being a dark moon) to see such fearful danger ready to destroy us. The fire was very high and violent and the brightness thereof so great in that dark night that the hills reflected light. The confused noise was no less, as well of the mariners on the one side crying and calling to their fellows about the ships, working with their heedless hasty running on the decks, as also of the crackling of the burnt bamboos, whizzing of the rockets, etc., fireworks from the fired flaming junks; . . . All this lasted first and last about two hours. By that time the junks were consumed and we through God's providence freed from that great danger and quieted, for which His holy name be praised."

Not unnaturally Weddell assumed that the Portuguese had intrigued against him in Canton and engineered this attack. As he had heard nothing from his merchants for over a week, he concluded that they had been imprisoned, also through Portuguese "procurement and instigation." This was in fact far from the truth. The Canton officials had learnt, possibly, but not certainly, through Portuguese informers, that the English fleet was still in the river, and that English merchants were actually doing business in the city. Outraged by this flagrant disregard of their letter, they had decided to teach the barbarian pirates a lesson. The merchants had been detained in their lodging and Norette had been arrested and flogged.

Weddell, ignorant of the true facts, reacted in the way most natural to him. Dropping all attempts at peaceful negotiation, he stormed up and down the river doing as much damage as possible, sinking junks, burning and looting villages, kidnapping and murdering the inhabitants. By such demonstrations he hoped to intimidate the Chinese officials, who, as he shrewdly judged, would give in to him for fear that this disturbance might come to the ears of higher authorities. As a final gesture, he completed the destruction of the Anung-hoi fort by blasting it with gunpowder.

Meanwhile a letter had arrived from two of the Englishmen at Canton to say that they were virtually prisoners, and had lost sight of their money and their other companion. Weddell, who after blowing up the fort, had retreated down the river to escape reprisals, sent a protest to the Captain General of Macao, accusing him of treachery, demanding damages and the immediate release of his men. These unfounded allegations were answered with admirable diplomacy. A Jesuit priest was sent to visit him, who, it seems without difficulty, pacified the choleric English captain and convinced him that the Portuguese were in no way responsible for his troubles. The result of this interview was that Weddell wrote an almost servile letter to the Captain General, imploring



him to intercede on his behalf with the Chinese. Like many bombastic characters, Weddell could be easily quelled.

At this moment, when good relations with the Portuguese were so essential, an event occurred which must have put a considerable strain on his self-control. A great Spanish galleon, arriving from Manila, sailed into the estuary and anchored near the English fleet; she was the Acapulco treasure galleon that sailed yearly across the Pacific trading between Mexico and the Philippines, and was known to carry, besides a rich cargo of spices, a quantity of silver and gold. Such was the outlook of Weddell and his men, brought up as they were in the tradition that any Spanish ship was the proper prey of English sailors, that although England was then at peace with Spain and her vassal state, Portugal, they seriously debated whether they should seize her. When, in the interests of the imprisoned merchants at Canton, it was prudently decided to leave her alone, there was great discontent among the crews; in the words of Mundy: "Our not intercepting her bred great murmuring in our whole fleet amongst the commonalty." The Chinese, after all, were not so far wrong when they classed the Englishmen as pirates.

Fortunately friendship with the Portuguese was maintained. Through their mediation, negotiations for the return of the merchants were put in hand; a Jesuit made a correct translation of the letter from the Military Governor, and Weddell learnt, to his mortification, how grossly he had been deceived. The Chinese, who had become thoroughly alarmed by Weddell's depredations, showed themselves willing to come to terms, and intimated that they would release the merchants provided that he signed an undertaking to leave Chinese waters and never return again.

While this was being arranged, the Portuguese allowed the Englishmen to carry on a limited trade with Macao, and Weddell, accompanied by Mundy and some others, were hospitably received on the island. As in Goa, they found much flaunting display to entertain them: dramas acted by "well favoured" Chinese boys; a contest on horseback known as "Running at the Ring," and another referred to by Mundy as "Juego de Alcanzías," in which the cavalleros of one side were dressed as Christians, and on the other as Moors of Barbary. In St. Paul's church, a gorgeous baroque building with a Grecian façade and elaborately carved roof, gilded and "painted in exquisite colours, as vermilion, azure, etc.," they saw a play of the life of St. Francis Xavier, which included an extraordinary ballet danced by children dressed as crabs:

"It was part of the life of their renowned Saint Francisco Xavier, in the which were divers pretty passages, viz., A China dance by children in China habit; a battle between the Portugalls and the

Dutch in a dance, where the Dutch was overcome, but without any reproachful speech or disgraceful action to that nation.

"Another dance of broad crabs, commonly called stool crabs, being so many boys very prettily and wittily disguised into the said form, who sung and played on instruments as though they had been so many crabs."

The Portuguese colonies, during their leisurely decline, had developed a sophisticated enjoyment of life unknown in the stolidly luxurious factories of their aggressive, crudely self-indulgent English rivals.

At last the English merchants arrived from Canton. Although their movements had been restricted, and for a time they had been kept short of provisions, they had not been too harshly treated, for before leaving the city they had been allowed to spend all the money they had with them on a cargo of sugar, ginger, porcelain and silk. The fleet now made ready to depart. Up till the last moment Mundy had hoped to wangle a passage to Mexico on the Spanish galleon; to sail in this great foreign ship across that half of the world which was still unknown to him, had been an irresistibly alluring scheme:

"So that finding myself at present in or about one hundred and twenty degrees off east longitude from England, it bred in me a desire to proceed on the same easterly course till I had ended where I began, and so to have once made one circle round the globe of the earth, which would have been a voyage of voyages."

But too many objections were raised, and Mundy had to return home with Weddell. The Englishmen set sail just six months after their arrival off the coast of China. Although they had proved that the Chinese were no match for them in war, the expedition had been disappointing and humiliating. They had been tricked and spurned and forced to humble themselves to the Portuguese; moreover they had failed to open trading relations, and much of the money which they had brought for buying Chinese products they had been unable to use. As Mundy puts it, they left: "Having been for these six months variously crossed in our design, our lives, shipping goods, etc., molested, endangered damnified," . . .

Yet Mundy, with his wide experience and his detachment, had been able to gain some inkling of the greatness of China. The Chinese might be ridiculous soldiers, their bureaucracy might be corrupt, their stubborn objection to foreign traders maddening; but these things, he realised, were the superficial blemishes of an ancient and splendid structure. Beyond his reach he sensed the existence of a great and rich civilisation, defective in detail, but noble in outline, a civilisation from which he and blustering Weddell and the sly diplomatic

Portuguese were all excluded. In spite of his many unpleasant experiences, he was able to sum up his opinion of the country under the heading "China's Excellencies," and these seem to have included all the blessings any state could desire :

"This country may be said to excell in these particulars : Antiquity largeness, richness, healthiness, plentifulness. For arts and manners of government I think no kingdom in the world comparable to it, considered altogether."

The Ming dynasty, which had ruled since the expulsion of the Mongols, came to an end just seven years after Captain Weddell's tragi-comic attempt to force the Chinese to trade. The three centuries of its rule had not been a very progressive period of Chinese history. Art and literature had been elegant rather than highly creative ; the court, although splendid, had often been licentious ; bureaucratic administration had grown increasingly corrupt. But during the seventeenth century, when Chinese civilisation had become static, a foreign influence, which might have produced immeasurable benefits for the whole world, had brought the stimulus of new ideas. The Jesuit missionaries, who had gained admittance to Peking in 1601, had been brilliant ambassadors of western civilisation. Wisely, they had made no attempt to assert themselves as superior beings, but adopting the habits and manners of the country, they had sought to gain the respect of the Chinese by studying their culture and by drawing their attention to what was most valuable in western learning. The first of them, Matteo Ricci, had mastered literary Chinese before attempting to enter the country ; in Peking he had taught arithmetic, geography and astronomy, gathering round him those Chinese scholars who were interested in science. Adam Schall, a Jesuit astronomer who came to the capital just before the fall of the Mings, had pursued his researches in the imperial observatory, and so impressed the Chinese that they had commissioned him to produce a new almanac, based on the European calendar, to replace the Mohammedan, which had been used in China since the Mongol dynasty. These, with other scientific Jesuits, had thus established themselves as scholars, and so become members of the class that had always been most revered in the Chinese community. As missionaries, they had acted with the utmost discretion : rather than violate Chinese traditions they had tolerated the veneration of Confucius, and accepted ancestor worship as an aspect of Christ's teaching.

Their position remained unaltered by the fall of the Ming dynasty. The Manchus, an energetic conquering tribe from beyond the north-east frontier, were called into Peking in 1644 during an internal revolution, and subsequently gained control of the whole country. Like the Mongol

invaders, they were wise enough to respect Chinese culture and institutions, and as the Jesuits had earned for themselves a place in this culture, they were accorded the same privileges as before. Indeed K'ang Hsi,<sup>1</sup> the second Manchu Emperor, had a natural aptitude for mathematics, and gave every encouragement to Jesuit scientists. Moreover he was genuinely impressed by their religious teaching, and considered becoming a Christian. Had he done so, the course of world history might have been different.

It was the greatest possible misfortune both for China and for Europe, that at this time, when the Chinese were just about to understand the meaning of western civilisation, the Pope, hearing that the Catholic missionaries were tolerating ancestor worship among their converts, sent an envoy to eradicate the heresy. This envoy, one Tournon, who reached Peking in 1704, was compelled to enforce the Papal Edict, and to order all Jesuits who refused to conform to it to leave the country. His action enraged Kang H'si, who, as divine head of China, could not accept the Pope as divine head of the world, and who resented the removal of so many useful and instructive scientists. It must be remembered that this was the same Emperor—a progressive and intelligent ruler—who had in 1685 made the first concession to European merchants by allowing them to trade at Canton. The result of this purge of the Jesuits was that the popularity and influence of the missionaries declined, while the merchants pressed their claims with ever-increasing stridency. Thenceforth relations between China and Europe steadily deteriorated, until, in the early nineteenth century, the merchants forced their way into China behind the English and French armies. So it happened that Chinese intercourse with the West was mainly with the least enlightened of Europeans, the battering greedy merchants, rather than with the representatives of philosophy and science.

This was particularly tragic because one effect of early Jesuit activities was to arouse a sincere, if misinformed admiration for China in Europe. Besides translating European scientific works into Chinese, they had translated Chinese classics into Latin,<sup>2</sup> which had been eagerly read by the more advanced European intellectuals. The reasonable and practical code of Confucius, the Chinese love of nature,<sup>3</sup> the peaceful and democratic principles of Chinese government, had strongly appealed to those possessed of the new humanitarian ideals of the eighteenth

<sup>1</sup> Reigned 1662-1723.

<sup>2</sup> The Chinese classics had not until then been made known to the outside world. Although Hindu culture, through Buddhism, had been made known to China by the translation of Sanskrit texts into Chinese, no Chinese texts had been translated into Sanskrit.

<sup>3</sup> Europeans had only a superficial and literary idea of this. The cult of nature—of truth—coming from the Tao, prior to Lao Tze, was unknown to them.



century. More widespread, but less significant, was the fashion for Chinese art. Chinese objects, though not the best, became the passion of cultured society; much porcelain, though not of the finest quality, was imported, together with cabinets, lacquer work, silks and embroideries. Graceful if distorted copies of these were produced all over Europe, and Chinese motives in architecture, drawings, prints, furniture, textiles and wallpaper added a fantastic, somewhat irresponsible delicacy to the rococo style of the eighteenth century. Superficial as was much of this cult, as superficial as the Chinese delight in the European clocks and mechanical toys brought by the Jesuits, at least it was a better basis for understanding than the bitter contest between European mercantile aggression and Chinese conservatism.

The Jesuit influence in China was checked before it had time to bring about any profound results. The Chinese were attracted to western science as to an intriguing novelty, but they had hardly begun to grasp the value of the civilisation that produced it. Europe lost almost as much by the decline of the Jesuits in China. Their appreciative reports of Chinese learning, customs and government were superseded by the indignant complaints of frustrated merchants. Europe saw China through the eyes of her least cultured citizens; by the end of the eighteenth century the Celestial Kingdom, the pattern of civilisation, had become that tiresome country where no one could do business.

*Richard Walter ; A Voyage round the World, by George Anson, Esq., in the years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV. By George Anson, Esq.,<sup>1</sup> afterwards commander in chief of a Squadron of His Majesty's Ships, sent upon an expedition to the South Seas.*

A writer who did much to discredit the Chinese cult in England was Mr. Walter, chaplain to Captain Anson, who in the course of his Pacific voyage visited Canton in 1742 and 1743. This was no commonplace trading enterprise, but a dramatic naval adventure that became the talk of England and Europe. England was then at war with Spain, and the government had decided to send a squadron into the Pacific for the purpose of plundering Spanish ports and shipping, and in particular, the famous Acapulco treasure galleon, the prize which had so tempted Weddell a century earlier, and which still sailed yearly between Mexico and Manila.

Mr. Walter's book, relating how Anson sacked Païta, captured the treasure galleon, asserted British naval power in China, and sailed

<sup>1</sup> *George Anson* (1697-1762), After this famous voyage he worked at the Admiralty until his death, became First Lord, and did much to correct corruption and bad discipline in the navy. In 1747 he was made Baron Anson of Soberton.

round the world, was very widely read. The horrors it describes were alone enough to make it a literary sensation. Anson was handicapped by quite exceptional misfortunes. Unprecedented storms were encountered near Cape Horn; by the time he reached the Chile coast his fleet of seven ships was reduced to three, and these were dangerously undermanned because nearly half the men had died of scurvy. The survivors, to their credit, followed the heroic tradition of English seafaring; like many earlier Englishmen in equally deplorable situations, like Lancaster and his crew, for instance, on the first disastrous voyage to the East, they found courage to attack and defeat an enemy possessed of every resource. Under Anson's inspiring leadership numerous Spanish ships were seized, and Paita, a port in Peru, was occupied, looted, and burned.

Having discovered, to his disappointment, that he had reached the coast of Mexico too late to intercept the Acapulco galleon on her return voyage from Manila, Anson set sail for home across the Pacific with the two ships that then remained to him. During this long and unlucky voyage the dreaded and disgusting scurvy again killed off numbers of his men, and one of the ships was so badly damaged in a storm that she had to be abandoned. When he finally reached China all that was left of his imposing expedition was his battered and leaking flag-ship, the *Centurion*, and about two hundred out of the thousand men who had originally left England.

But though these much-tried Englishmen might be in a needy, almost desperate state, worn out by the illnesses and hardships of two years at sea, some dressed in rags, others in tattered finery looted from Paita—many of the sailors, we learn, had appropriated "women's gowns and petticoats" as there were not enough men's clothes to go round—although their appearance might be grotesque, and their ship dilapidated, they were none the less mortified that the swarms of fishermen they encountered off the coast of China took no interest in them whatever. The *Centurion* was, after all, a British man-of-war, and the first that had ever been seen in those waters, "so that we might reasonably have expected," complains Mr. Walter, "to have been considered by them as a very uncommon and extraordinary object." It was indeed disappointing that the Chinese, a people famed for their intelligence, should have been so utterly devoid of curiosity:

"But though many of their boats came close to the ship, yet they did not appear to be at all interested about us, nor did they deviate in the least from their course to regard us. Which insensibility, especially of maritime persons, in a matter relating to their own profession, is scarcely to be credited, did not the general behaviour of the Chinese, in other instances, furnish us with continual proofs of a similar turn of

mind. It may perhaps be doubted, whether this cast of temper be the effect of nature or education ; but in either case, it is an incontestable symptom of a mean and contemptible disposition, and is alone sufficient confutation of the extravagant praises, which many prejudiced writers have bestowed on the ingenuity and capacity of this nation."

Mr. Walter was to view the Chinese with a different type of prejudice. As one of the overstrained survivors of a particularly gallant and arduous expedition, he was in no mood to sympathise with their lofty indifference. Moreover, having grown up with an unquestioning respect for the mechanical skill and scientific outlook which had been so eagerly developed in Europe during the past hundred years, he could never have understood why the industrious, peaceable, self-sufficient Chinese regarded a fishing ship as a more estimable object than a battleship, and the warlike pretensions of western seamen as too nonsensical to merit attention. In all the long course of Chinese history, the only threat to the empire had been from the nomad tribes in the north ; garrisons had always been adequately maintained along this frontier, while the coastal defences, as Weddell discovered, had been neglected. Such was the conservatism of the Chinese mind that when, at last, European traders were admitted to Canton, no one had thought of improving its negligible fortifications. The westerners were regarded as a useful source of revenue ; it was not imagined that they could ever constitute a more serious menace than the pirates who had always caused chronic disturbances on the coast.

Thus Anson, like Captain Weddell, was classed as a pirate when he appeared at Canton ; in the ceremonious words of Mr. Walter, the Chinese "considered him rather as a lawless freebooter than as one commissioned by the State for the revenge of public injuries." Their object, therefore, was to get rid of him with as little unpleasantness as possible. Anson, on the other hand, considered himself the distinguished representative of a great foreign power ; his chief concern was that the Chinese should recognise that he was superior to any mere merchant and accord him appropriate privileges. It was impossible for him to conceive that in the estimation of the Chinese he was less than a merchant, and that for them no foreign powers existed, only barbarians who either had or had not submitted to the Son of Heaven. Such were the ridiculous but profound misunderstandings that directed the tragic course of Anglo-Chinese relationships.

In order to affirm his status, Anson decided that in no circumstances would he pay the port dues levied on merchantmen entering the Canton river. He therefore left the *Centurion* at anchor near Macao,<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> As Portugal had freed herself from the Spanish domination in 1640, she was not involved in the war between England and Spain.

went up to Canton himself by boat to put his case to the Viceroy, and request permission to buy provisions and materials for repairing his ship. He might of course have had his way quite simply by sailing into the Canton harbour and ordering whatever he wanted, as the Chinese had no forces with which to oppose the *Centurion*; but out of consideration for the English merchants, who would certainly have had to bear reprisals for such high-handed behaviour, he preferred to use diplomacy. In Canton, however, he soon learnt, as Weddell had done before him, that the Chinese, if weak in arms, possessed a formidable obstructive power in their bureaucracy. At the end of an exasperating month, which he spent in the cramped English factory listening to the innumerable grievances of the merchants, he had not even accomplished the preliminary to his plan—an audience with the Viceroy. It was only by promising the Chinese that he would set sail at once for Batavia that he finally obtained provisions and facilities for repairing the *Centurion*, and this had to be carried out not at Canton, but at Macao. His audience with the Viceroy, which his dignity demanded, he had to forego altogether.

Anson, however, was not a man to be made a fool of so easily. He had never had any intention of proceeding to Batavia; for one thing, it was the wrong season of the year, and the wind would have been against him all the way to the Cape. As soon as China was out of sight he informed his jubilant crew that he proposed to lie in wait off Manila for the Alcapulco galleon, which, so it was rumoured, would shortly be arriving from Mexico. For once his designs were not frustrated. The *Centurion* reached her destination without accident; the galleon duly appeared, and after an exciting battle, the English, although heavily outnumbered, forced her to surrender. The loot they gained was enough to compensate for all the miseries of the voyage; it was found that the galleon carried nearly four hundred thousand pounds' worth of silver, an enormous sum for the period, and worth about two millions today.<sup>1</sup>

Returning to China with this great galleon as a prize, with the *Centurion* loaded with treasure and her hold stuffed with Spanish prisoners, the Englishmen were in no mood to haggle with Chinese officials. Anson boldly sailed up the river, ignoring the nervous protests of the commander of the Anung-hoi fort, which then, as in the time of Weddell, had no more than a decorative value. But though it was obvious that "the *Centurion* alone was capable of destroying the whole

<sup>1</sup> As the Spanish had difficulty in finding any goods that were acceptable in the East, they commonly sent the galleon freighted with silver with which to pay for her oriental cargo. The English experienced the same difficulty in their trade with China until, at the end of the eighteenth century, they took to smuggling opium into the country.



navigation of the port of Canton, or of any other port in China, without running the least risk from all the force the Chinese could collect"; the outraged officials could still play their old game of polite passive resistance. Months passed while the *Centurion* lay intimidatingly in the river; Mandarins came and went with smiles and promises, and Anson made no progress whatever towards achieving his aims, which were to obtain a large quantity of salted provisions for his homeward voyage, to be exempted from paying port dues, and to be received by the Viceroy of Canton. Meanwhile the Chinese tradesmen, who delivered daily supplies to the *Centurion*, exacerbated the Englishmen by petty thieving and ingenious cheating. Mr. Walter's account of these sordid transactions abounds in such phrases as: "in artifice, falsehood, and attachment to all kinds of lucre many of the Chinese are difficult to be paralleled by any other people"; "their fraudulent and selfish turn of temper"; "the strange bias of the nation towards dishonesty"; and concludes: "it were endless to recount all the artifices, extortions and frauds which were practised upon the commodore by this interested race."

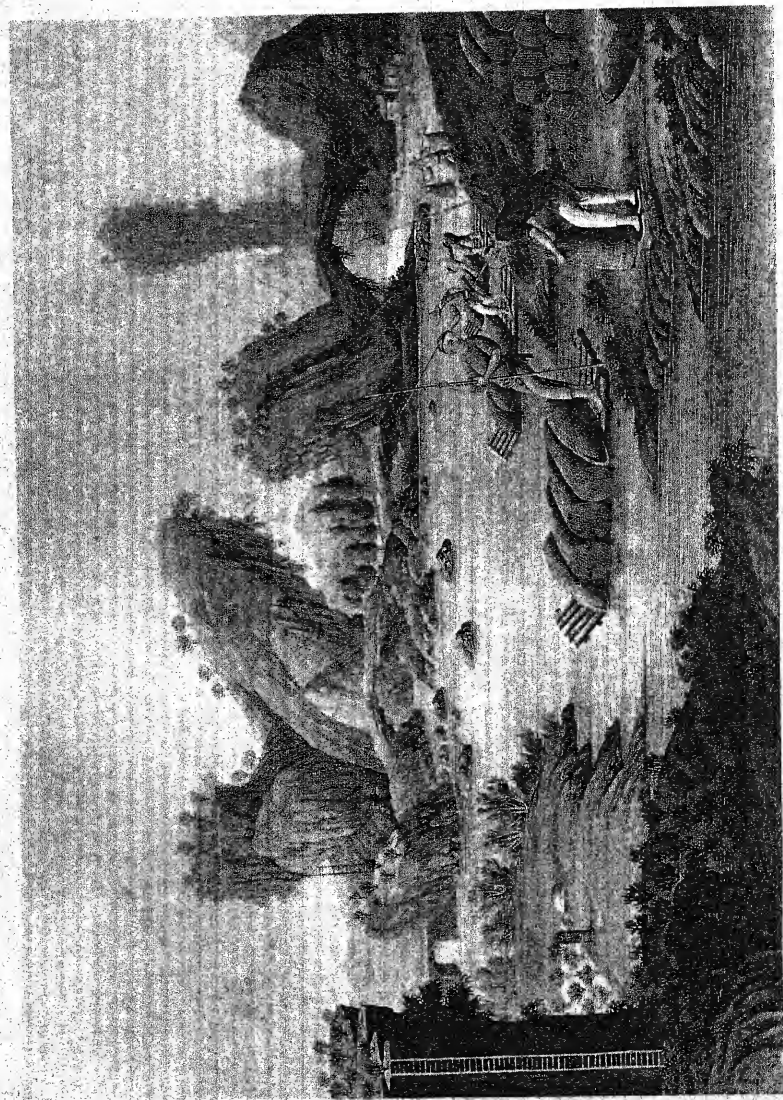
No doubt Anson, like his less temperate predecessor Weddell, would finally have lost patience, but for a lucky accident which suddenly enabled the Chinese to meet his demands without loss of face. A serious fire broke out in the suburbs of Canton near the foreign warehouses, which threatened to spread into the town; the Chinese fire brigade, which arrived late on the scene, was apparently paralysed with alarm, and in desperation the Viceroy appealed to Anson for help. The Englishmen, "behaving with the agility and boldness peculiar to sailors," threw themselves into the fight with relish; the fire was soon extinguished, and the Viceroy, in gratitude, received Anson the very next day and granted him the desired permits. When Anson, however, took this opportunity of begging him to redress certain injustices practised upon the English merchants, the Viceroy refrained from giving an answer.

At last the *Centurion* was ready to leave: the stores were taken on board, and the Englishmen sailed down the river out of this country of which they had formed the worst possible opinion. As they passed the Anung-hoi fort, the garrison made a childish effort to impress them, which, as might be expected, they viewed with the utmost contempt:

"These garrisons affected to show themselves as much as possible to the ships, and were doubtless intended to induce Mr. Anson to think more reverently than he had hitherto done of Chinese military power: For this purpose they were equipped with extraordinary parade, having a great number of colours exposed to view, and on the castle



Portraits of Ch'ien Lung.  
*From Chinese water colours given by the Emperor to Lord  
Macartney. In the A. Bahr collection.*



River Scene.

*From a Chinese water colour given by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung to Lord Macartney. In the A. Bahr collection.*

in particular there was laid considerable heaps of large stones ; and a soldier of unusual size, dressed in very slightly armour, stalked about on the parapet with a battle-axe in his hand, endeavouring to put on as important and martial an air as possible, though some observers on board the *Centurion* shrewdly suspected, from the appearance of his armour, that, instead of steel, it was composed only of a particular kind of glittering paper."

Mr. Walter winds up his book with a general estimate of the Chinese, and this, published at a period when enthusiasm for China was at its height, must have been extremely startling. In his opinion, all "the fustian elogiums bestowed upon them by the Romish missionaries residing in the East," were misleading. Their craftsmanship, for instance, which had been so universally admired, lacked originality, and was inferior to that of the Japanese: "Indeed their principal excellency seems to be imitation ; and they accordingly labour under that poverty of genius which constantly attends all servile imitators." In their painting, "nothing great or spirited" was to be found ; while as for their system of government, "the subject of boundless panegyric" in Europe, Mr. Anson's experiences were sufficient to prove that their magistrates were corrupt, "their people thievish, and their tribunals venal and abounding in artifice." Moreover a government which failed to provide for the security of the nation was obviously "a most defective institution," and it was a fact that "this rich and extensive country, so pompously celebrated for its refined wisdom and policy, was conquered about an age since by a handful of Tatars and even now through the cowardice of the inhabitants, and the want of proper military regulations, it continues exposed not only to the attempts of any potent state, but to the ravages of every petty invader." Mr. Walter's book was almost an invitation to his countrymen to take up arms, invade the country, and conquer it, for its own good, naturally, and for the security of British trade.

Nearly a hundred years were to elapse before Britain resorted to the measures suggested in Mr. Walter's book. Meanwhile the East India merchants continued to live in almost penal conditions, and to have their business handicapped by varying and arbitrary tariff charges, against which they had no adequate appeal. By 1792 the situation had become so unsatisfactory that it was decided to send an embassy to Peking, to the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, in the hope of obtaining better trading terms, and above all, of establishing relations with China on a basis of equality such as existed between other sovereign states. It was, however, realised that this essential condition, the only possible basis for negotiations, might well be refused. The English had come to understand some-



thing about the Chinese, more at least, than the Chinese understood about them: they now suspected, grotesque though it might be, that the Chinese regarded all foreigners as inferiors. Moreover they had the example of several previous embassies, from the Portuguese, and the Dutch,<sup>1</sup> which although received with every courtesy, had failed to make any headway because they had been treated as tribute-bearing missions, and not as representing independent states.

The British government was therefore at pains to ensure that this embassy should give the Chinese a proper idea of the wealth, talents, and businesslike refinement of Britain, should force them, in fact, to take George III seriously. Lord Macartney, who was chosen as ambassador, was an admirable example of that type which had been assiduously cultivated in Britain since the time when George Lassels, the seventeenth-century schoolmaster, had taken well-born country bumpkins to Italy to learn manners, elegance and composure. The son of an Irish country gentleman, he had toured the continent, become the friend of Voltaire—one of the leading admirers of China—and made himself a popular figure in the literary and social worlds of London. At the age of only twenty-seven he had scored a great success as Envoy Extraordinary to the court of Catherine the Great of Russia; later he had become a member of parliament, an Irish peer, and had satisfactorily filled the post of Governor of Madras.

His staff included, besides his deputy, Sir George Staunton, Bart., and besides the usual secretaries, a number of specialists qualified to offer Chi'en Lung the benefits of western science and accomplishment. There was a "Physician and Philosopher," a "Physician and Surgeon," a Portrait Painter, a Draftsman, and a Mathematical Instrument-Maker. A "Mechanist" was especially appointed to look after the presents to the Emperor, for among these were some very valuable and intricate objects, displaying the latest scientific advances: telescopes, lenses, terrestrial and celestial globes, a planetarium, and "Fraser's Orrery,"—a clockwork model of the planetary system. Macartney was also provided with an air balloon, and someone willing to make an ascent in it from Peking. It was indeed not for lack of expense, forethought, talent, or even imagination that this embassy was a complete failure.

*Lord Macartney<sup>2</sup>; Journal of an Embassy to China.*

After a long and rather unusual voyage, by way of Rio de Janiero,

<sup>1</sup> Dutch embassies had gone to Peking in 1655 and 1669.

<sup>2</sup> *George Macartney* (1737-1806). After his return from China he went to Italy on a confidential mission in 1795, was created a baron in the English peerage in 1796, and in the same year was appointed governor of the newly acquired territory of the Cape of Good Hope. He resigned owing to ill health in 1798.

Tristan da Cunha, Amsterdam Island, and Batavia, the embassy ships came to anchor at the mouth of the Pai-ho river, only a few days' journey from Peking. No other English ships had ever been allowed to visit this part of the coast, and the permission granted to Macartney to land there, instead of at Canton, was a very great concession. His reception was all that he could have desired. Two Mandarins, Van-ta-gin and Chou-ta-gin, who were to attend him during his stay in China, greeted him with extreme courtesy. Simultaneously, enormous quantities of provisions appeared, for according to Chinese custom an embassy, while in China, lived at the expense of the government. The Englishmen, all the time they were in the country, never ceased to be amazed by the extravagance of this hospitality.

The whole embassy staff, the presents and the carriages, the military guard and the musicians, then embarked in a fleet of junks and glided slowly up the river towards Peking. Here, at last, was the Celestial Empire; not the drab precincts of Canton, full of contentious foreign merchants and shark-like Chinese officials; but an incredibly gay and brilliant land of richly cultivated fields in full August magnificence; pavilions set in elegant gardens, palaces gilded and painted; towns "populous beyond description". Along the banks the innumerable flags and standards and pennants of the soldiers lined up in honour of the embassy made a mile-long flutter of red and green and yellow and blue and white; in Tientsin a theatre was erected for the occasion on the quay, a wooden building, flying coloured ribbons and streamers in which the glitter of the gilded scenery was equalled by that of the ornate costumes of the actors who performed acrobatic feats and artificial battles. During the next six months China was to provide a perpetually changing pageant of such sparkling and fantastic scenes; as the disappointments of the Englishmen accumulated, so did their pleasures, until at last, thoroughly fooled, thoroughly impressed, dazed by exotic festivities, they were thankful to find themselves eating Christmas dinner with the English merchants in Canton, whose position they had done nothing at all to ameliorate.

On reaching Peking they were given only a few days' rest before proceeding to Jehol, where the Emperor was holding his summer court in his ancestral Manchu capital. The house allotted to them was actually outside Peking, in the garden of the Summer Palace, the famous Yüan-ming Yüan, an artificial landscape, as studied as a painting, formed of hills and lakes and waterways originally created out of sixty thousand acres of flat plain. The embassy was lodged in one of the many pavilion-like buildings that were dotted about its enchanting vistas. Macartney, however, in common with others of his party, thought it draughty and dilapidated, and altogether too much like a summer house, and applied for more conventional accommodation in Peking. He was at

once provided with a very handsome modern house inside the city. It had been built at enormous expense by the former "Hoppon" (*Hai Kuan-Pu*), the Collector of Customs at Canton, but it had recently been confiscated by the government, along with the rest of his property, when he had been imprisoned for corrupt practices. The wits of Peking, notes Macartney, were much amused when it was assigned to the English, for it had undoubtedly been built with money squeezed out of their countrymen in Canton.

Before leaving Peking the larger and more fragile of the presents were set out in the Hall of Audience in the Summer Palace to await the Emperor's return. The lustres were hung from the ceiling; the planetarium, Fraser's orrery, the terrestrial and celestial globes, the clocks and the Derbyshire porcelain vases were suitably arranged about the room. Macartney was very well satisfied with the result, and when, on the way to Jehol, he learned what sort of presents the Chinese were expecting, he treated the matter as a joke:

"This evening, our interpreters amused us with an extract from one of the Tientsin gazettes, which seem to be much on a par with our own newspapers for wit and authenticity. In an account given there of the presents said to be brought for the Emperor from England the following articles are mentioned: Several dwarfs or little men not twelve inches high, but in form as perfect as grenadiers; an elephant not larger than a cat, and a horse the size of a mouse; a singing bird as big as a hen, that feeds upon charcoal, and devours usually fifty pounds per day; and lastly, an enchanted pillow, on which whoever lays his head immediately falls asleep, and if he dreams of any distant place, such as Canton, Formosa, or Europe, is instantly transported thither without the fatigue of travelling. This little anecdote, however ridiculous, I thought would not be fair to leave out of my journal."

He did not realise that to the spoilt Manchu courtiers nothing short of such Mandevillian marvels would be of interest. When Macartney came to China, Ch'ien Lung,<sup>1</sup> an old man of eighty-three, had been on the throne for fifty-seven years. During his long reign, a certain development in Chinese art, superb of its kind, had reached its zenith. The Emperor himself was an admirable calligraphist and an elegant poet; many pieces in his great collection of porcelain were inscribed with poems composed by him, and written in his own hand. His collections were magnificent. A formidable scholar and connoisseur, he had conceived it his first duty to preserve and glorify the great heritage

<sup>1</sup> Ch'ien Lung reigned 1736-96.

of Chinese art. During his reign the imperial palaces had become fabulous treasure houses of works of art: porcelains, paintings, bronzes and jades. Perhaps the most celebrated of his achievements was a literary encyclopædia, compiled under his direction; this stupendous work included every book that had ever been published in China, each accompanied by a critical introduction.

The men who lived surrounded by this wealth of traditional splendour were hardly likely to appreciate Macartney's lustres and Derbyshire porcelains. Nor would they be impressed, as the English had hoped, by such objects as the planetarium, the orrery, or the globes. With the decline of Jesuit influence the Chinese had lost any serious interest in science; mechanical objects, once studied with intellectual curiosity, were now regarded merely as luxurious toys. A flying pillow was a pleasing fancy, but when Macartney offered to demonstrate his air balloon, the Emperor's Grand Secretary politely changed the subject.

There was a certain amount of political shrewdness in this conservatism. The Celestial Empire had never been more powerful: K'ang Hsi had brought Tibet under Chinese domination, Ch'ien Lung had conquered Turkistan and drew tribute from Cochín-China and Korea. But the Manchus, in spite of their power and wealth and prestige, were still foreigners in China, and Ch'ien Lung was aware that he could not afford to encourage any disturbing influences. The English, he realised, were not to be trusted. They had gone to India as innocuous traders; but they had made themselves a political power in the country, largely by fomenting rebellions against the Moghuls. If they, or their trade, or even their scientific influence were encouraged, they might well make trouble in China. In the eyes of the Manchus their inventions were a cunning device for increasing their influence, for creating discontent and dissention, and eventually, since these inventions included warships and artillery, for creating war. Ch'ien Lung had decided in advance to have nothing to do with any inventions Macartney might offer, and to get rid of him and his embassy as quickly as politeness permitted.<sup>1</sup>

Macartney had soon begun to suspect, from various hints, that he would not be allowed to stay long in China, let alone set up a permanent embassy in Peking. He had also grasped that whereas the Chinese were comparatively friendly, their Manchu rulers were definitely opposed

<sup>1</sup> Horace Walpole was acute enough to understand the Chinese point of view. Writing to Lady Ossory in 1794 of the failure of Macartney's mission, he remarks: "I am not at all surprised at Lord Macartney's miscarriage; nor can help admiring the prudence of the Chinese. They would be distracted to connect with Europeans, and cannot be ignorant of our usurpations in India, though they may be ignorant of Peruvian and Mexican histories, and the no less shocking transactions in France."



to him.<sup>1</sup> Yet he still thought that he might prevail upon the Emperor. Just before his audience his hopes were raised by what he regarded as a most encouraging concession. The tricky question of the kow-tow had been under discussion ever since he entered the country. According to Chinese court etiquette, anyone having audience with the Emperor was obliged to fall on both knees and touch the ground three times with his forehead. This was the obeisance due to the Universal Monarch, the Son of Heaven, and all previous foreign ambassadors had been compelled to prostrate themselves in this way. But Macartney realised that if he complied with this ceremony he would thereby acknowledge, as every other ambassador had indeed been forced to do, that the sovereign he represented was a tributary of Ch'ien Lung. He therefore tactfully proposed to perform the same obeisance to Ch'ien Lung as to the King of England; that is to say, to kneel on one knee and kiss the Emperor's hand. With a resourceful subtlety which, perhaps, influenced the Chinese in his favour, he stated that alternatively, he was willing to perform the kow-tow, provided that a Chinese of rank equal to his own kow-towed before a picture of George III. Finally, two days before his audience with the Emperor, the Chinese agreed that he should perform the English ceremony, but omitting the kissing of the hand.

It was therefore with reasonable self-assurance that Macartney set out for his audience with the Emperor, which was to take place at the traditional hour of sunrise, in a group of tents erected in the garden of the Jehol palace. Macartney was dressed for the occasion in a suit of spotted mulberry velvet, and over it he wore the full robes and insignia of the Order of the Bath. Sir George Staunton wore rich embroidered velvet under the scarlet gown of his university degree, for he was a Doctor of Law at Oxford University. They proceeded in full state, accompanied by musicians, guards, and the gentlemen of the embassy on horseback. After waiting about an hour, the Englishmen heard the drums and music that heralded the Emperor's approach.

"He was seated in an open palanquin, carried by sixteen bearers, attended by a number of officers bearing flags, standards and umbrellas, and as he passed we paid him our compliment by kneeling on one knee, whilst all the Chinese made their usual prostrations. As soon as he had ascended his throne I came to the entrance of the tent, and holding in both my hands a large gold box enriched with diamonds in which was enclosed the King's letter, I walked deliberately up, and ascending the side-steps to the throne, delivered it into the Emperor's

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese Mandarins Van-ta-gin and Chou-ta-gin were always sympathetic, but the more important Manchu officials—the Emperor's Legate, who met the embassy at Tientsin, and the Grand Secretary—were either chillingly polite or openly hostile.

own hands, who, having received it, passed it to the Minister, by whom it was placed on the cushion."

Presents were then exchanged: Macartney offered the Emperor his personal gift, a pair of beautiful enamelled watches set with diamonds, and the Emperor handed him a Ju-i, or sceptre, of carved jade, as a present to the King, and two more for himself and Sir George Staunton. Sir George Staunton then offered the Emperor "two elegant air-guns."

Although Macartney did not regard the sceptres as very valuable gifts, he thought the Emperor's manner very affable, and their reception "very gracious and satisfactory." Sir George Staunton's son, a remarkably clever boy, who at thirteen could already speak German, French, Latin and Greek, and had managed to learn some Chinese during the voyage, was particularly favoured. Summoning him to the throne, the Emperor addressed him in Chinese, and was so pleased by the aptness of his reply and his mastery of the language, that he gave him a very beautiful fan, and an embroidered bag from his own belt.

A "most sumptuous" banquet followed, served with a decorum which amazed Macartney, accustomed though he was to the most aristocratic living in Europe:

"The order and regularity in serving and removing the dinner was wonderfully exact, and every function and ceremony performed with such silence and solemnity as in some measure to resemble the celebration of a religious ceremony."

Indeed, after five hours, during which various entertainments were given, such as tumbling, wrestling, and dramatic pieces he could say:

"I have seen 'King Solomon in all his glory.' I use this expression as the scene recalled perfectly to my mind a puppet show of that name which I recollect to have seen in my childhood, and which made so strong an impression on my mind that I thought it a true representation of human greatness and felicity."

The next morning he was again summoned at dawn, to salute the Emperor as he passed by in his palanquin to the pagoda where he paid his morning devotions. After this ceremony, he was taken round the palace garden by the Grand Secretary, accompanied by a party of high Manchu officials. This garden was rather less extraordinary than the Yüan-ming Yüan, for it had been created in a naturally beautiful spot, among real hills, valleys and streams. To Macartney, however, it was impressive enough:

"We rode about three miles through a very beautiful park, kept in the highest order, and much resembling the approach to Luton in

Bedfordshire; the grounds gently undulated and chequered with various groups of well-contrasted trees in the offship. As we moved onward an extensive lake appeared before us, the extremities of which seemed to lose themselves in distance and obscurity. Here was a large magnificent yacht ready to receive us, and a number of smaller ones for the attendants, elegantly fitted up and adorned with numberless vases, penants and streamers. Where any things particularly interesting were to be seen we disembarked, from time to time, to visit them, and I daresay that in the course of our voyage we stopped at forty or fifty different palaces or pavilions. These are all furnished in the richest manner, with pictures of the Emperor's huntings and progresses; with stupendous vases of jasper and agate; with the finest porcelain and japan, and with every kind of European toys and sing-songs; with spheres, orreries, clocks, and musical automats of such exquisite workmanship, and in such profusion that our presents must shrink from comparison and hide their diminished heads."

This was not the only mortification of the day. Macartney soon perceived that the Grand Secretary, though displaying "all the good breeding and politeness of an experienced courtier," was antagonistic; "his heart," he writes, "is not with us." Whenever Macartney tried to speak to him on the subject of the embassy, he was politely side-tracked. This was to become a familiar experience. During his two weeks' stay in Jehol he was overwhelmed with elaborate and exhausting entertainments, but he was never given the slightest chance of talking business. There was another early morning ceremony on the day of the Emperor's birthday, followed by another tour of the lovely garden; the day after, there were birthday celebrations: theatrical entertainments "abounding in love-scenes, battles, murders," followed by a "Grand Pantomime" which Macartney considered extremely ingenious:

"It seemed to me, as far as I could comprehend it, to represent the marriage of the Ocean and the Earth. The latter exhibited her riches and productions—dragons, elephants, tigers, eagles, and ostriches, oaks and pines and other different trees. The Ocean was not behindhand, but poured forth on the stage the wealth of his dominions, under the figure of whales, dolphins, porpoises, leviathans, and other sea-monsters; besides ships, rocks, shells, and corals—all performed by concealed actors, who were quite perfect in their parts, and performed their characters to admiration.

"These two marine and land regiments, after separately parading in a circular procession for a considerable time, at last joined together, and forming one body, came to the front of the stage, when, after a few evolutions, they opened to the right and left to give room for the whale, who seemed to be the commanding officer, to waddle forward, and who,

taking his station exactly opposite to the Emperor's box spouted out of his mouth into the pit several tons of water, which quickly disappeared through the perforations of the floor. This ejaculation was received with the highest applause, and two or three of the great men at my elbow desired me to take particular notice of it, repeating at the same time '*Hoha, hung, hoha!*' (Charming, delightful!)."

On this occasion the Emperor was particularly gracious, but when Macartney endeavoured to bring up business matters, he was palmed off with a "little box of old japan" as a present for the King, and for himself a book written in the Emperor's own hand, together with "several purses of arecanut."<sup>1</sup>

Laden with numerous, though not all very valuable presents, tired, frustrated and suffering badly from gout, Macartney returned to Peking with the Emperor and his court. In spite of many unfavourable signs he still hoped that he would be allowed to stay there until after the New Year, during which time he counted on being able to negotiate at least some of the objects of his mission. The embassy was accordingly installed with appropriate magnificence in the house of the imprisoned "Hoppon," a very commodious and typical *nouveau riche* palace, equipped with such diverting extravagances as a central heating system, a private theatre, and, in the courtyards, numerous triumphal arches and artificial ruins. The state canopy of flowered crimson satin fringed with gold, embroidered with the arms of Great Britain, was hung at one end of the main apartment, and at the other, full-length portraits of their British Majesties. More presents were unpacked and sent to the Yüan-ming Yüan: the lenses, some carriages, some cabinets of the best English workmanship, several Argand's lamps, and a model of the *Royal Sovereign*, a British first-rate man-of-war. But the Emperor, as Macartney had come to fear, was not particularly impressed when he went to view the assembled presents; in the words of Aenius Anderson, Macartney's witty and malicious valet: "As to the opinion which His Imperial Majesty formed of the presents, we could not learn, as he never communicated it. . . . We only knew, at this time, that the two camera obscuras were returned, foolishly enough, as more suited to the amusement of children, than the information of men of science."

Meanwhile Macartney, alarmed by a rumour that according to Chinese law no embassy might stay at court longer than forty days, solicited an interview with the Grand Secretary. Realising that this meeting was probably his last chance of discussing business, he brought up all the subjects mentioned in George III's letter to the Emperor: requests

<sup>1</sup> japan: lacquer. Arecanut: the areca nut is chewed with betel in India and other parts of the East, though rarely in China. It was a token commonly given by the Emperors of China to tributary barbarians, and was therefore a humiliating gift to Macartney, who, however, may not have realised its significance.



relating to a permanent British embassy in Peking, a Chinese embassy in London, and improved trading facilities. The result was one with which the ambassador had by now grown only too well accustomed: "The Minister, with his usual address, avoided entering into discussion of any of these points, which I had taken so much pains to lay before him." Early the next morning he was summoned to meet the Grand Secretary and various other ministers in the Imperial Palace. Harassed and ill, he was in no mood to appreciate the splendour of the Forbidden City; "several spacious courts" and "several magnificent bridges" were all he noticed as he was hurried to the Imperial Hall. Here the Grand Secretary, "without his usual graciousness of manner," showed him the Emperor's answer to the King's letter which was placed in state upon a yellow silk armchair, and handed him the remainder of the Emperor's presents to the embassy and to the King.

This was plainly the end. That afternoon the Emperor's letter was ceremoniously delivered at the embassy. Its contents were worse than poor Macartney could have imagined. George III was addressed as a vassal, his request for a permanent embassy in Peking dismissed as contrary to precedent, his presents referred to as "tribute-offerings" and "outlandish objects." After informing the King that it was useless for him to attempt to acquire Chinese civilisation, the Emperor concluded by exhorting him to continue in humble obedience:

"We must protest that our ways have no resemblance to yours and that even were your Envoy competent to acquire some rudiments of them, he could not transplant them to your barbarous land." . . . "We have expounded Our wishes and it is now your duty, King, to respect them, displaying in the future an even greater devotion than has inspired you in the past, so that by perpetual submission to the Dragon Throne you may insure peace and eternal prosperity to your country."

Orders were issued that the embassy should leave at once. Only three days were allowed for packing. Macartney had just time to send a memorandum, through the hands of the Grand Secretary, begging the Emperor to grant certain improvements in the conditions of trade. The answer, which was delivered to him on his way to the Pai-ho river, was a haughty, and even rather threatening refusal to all his requests.

The embassy ships were then at Canton, and in consequence, the Englishmen had to traverse the whole length of China, by river, lake and canal, that remarkable network of inland waterways that once made travel in China so easy and delightful. With the fall of the empire, this admirable transport system fell into disrepair, and travellers have been forced to endure the discomforts of inadequate roads and railways ever since. The journey of the English embassy from Peking to Canton, a leisurely two months' voyage through magnificent and ever-changing scenery, was far more commodious than any journey of similar length

that could be made in China today. Moreover Ch'ien Lung, it seems, had determined to compensate the Englishmen for whatever disappointments they had suffered at court by providing them with every luxury and entertainment that could be devised at this sophisticated and opulent period. Macartney, however, was too much worried by the failure of his mission fully to enjoy the amenities of the journey. His whole attention was given to long discussions with the highly-placed Mandarins who escorted him ; the first discussions he had been allowed, and which, although too late to bring about any practical results, might still, so he hoped, produce a better understanding between the two countries. At Hangchow he was joined by the new Viceroy of Canton, travelling there to take up office, and during the remainder of the voyage this indefatigable diplomat concentrated, without success as it afterwards turned out, on trying to secure improved terms for the English merchants.

But to the rest of the embassy this voyage was a memorable experience, particularly to the valet Aenius Anderson, a curious character who combined a sharp pernickety wit with an unusual sensitiveness to the beauties of architecture and scenery.

*Aenius Anderson : A Narrative of the British Embassy to China in the Years 1792, 1793, and 1794 ; containing the Various Circumstances of the Embassy ; with accounts of the Customs and Manners of the Chinese ; and a Description of the Country, Towns, Cities, etc., etc.*

The orders for immediate departure came as a shock to the embassy servants, ignorant as they had been of the course of official business. Aenius Anderson, who had the prim and precise views of a high-class valet, was indignant that the embassy should be hustled out of the city without sufficient time for packing :

"The hurry and confusion of this day is beyond description ; and if the soldiers had not been called in to assist in packing the baggage and stores, a much greater part must have been left behind, than actually became a prey to the Chinese.

"The portraits of their Majesties were taken down, but as the cases in which they had come from England had been broke up for fixtures in the apartments, a few deals, hastily nailed together, were now their only protection. As for the state canopy, it was not taken down, but absolutely torn from the wall ; as the original case that contained it had also been employed in various convenient uses, and there was not time to make a new one. The state chairs were presented to some of the Mandarins ; and the canopy was given to some of Lord Macartney's servants : though, in the scramble, the Chinese contrived to come in for a share. They also purloined a very large quantity of wine ; nor

was it possible, in such a scene of hurry and confusion, to prevent those opportunities which they were on the watch to seize."

But once the embassy was safely embarked in the fleet of junks which was to carry the Englishmen from the Pai-ho river to distant Canton, his ill-humour disappeared. The moving panorama of China delighted him: the "expansive scenery," the richly cultivated fields, the farms "embosomed in orchards," the lakes and rocks and wooded islands, the "stately pagodas," the pleasure-houses with their gilded pinnacles. The whole land teemed with life, revealing incalculable industry, and a flourishing inland commerce. Town succeeded town "in hasty and astonishing succession": towns surrounded by massive fortifications; huge mercantile centres full of junks laden with the rich produce of China, swarming with inquisitive spectators; towns full of handsome stone buildings, gracefully arched bridges and painted palaces. Each one was different from the last; the surprises of the voyage were continuous. One morning the Englishmen woke up to find themselves in a strange "sable city" of very tall houses all covered with black plaster, where the chief Mandarin had made preparations as elaborate as a stage set for their reception:

"The Mandarin who resided here had given to his hospitality the most elegant appearance. He had caused a temporary stage, or platform to be erected, from the palace side to the river, in case the Ambassador, and the Mandarins, should find it convenient to land. The roof of this building was covered with silk of every colour; a great number of lamps were suspended from it, fancifully adorned with gauze and ribands, and the floor was covered with a fine and variegated matting. But this was not the whole of the elegant attentions which was exerted by the Mandarin on this occasion; as he had caused a large screen, or curtain, of this matting, to be fixed on the opposite side of the water, in order to hide some ruinous buildings that would otherwise have disgraced the gay picture he had contrived, by their deformity."

The humiliations of Peking were forgotten, for this was indeed a triumphal progress. Never had the provisions supplied to the embassy been more plentiful or more appetising; never had the Mandarins been more flatteringly attentive. Everywhere palaces and gardens were decorated in honour of the visitors; at night, pagodas, islands, sometimes whole cities were illuminated for the occasion. Mile after mile, soldiers flying their gaudy pennants were lined along the banks; at night their lanterns made a dazzling galaxy; salutes of gunfire were almost continuous; "In short," noted Aenius Anderson, "from Tartary to Canton, it was a chain of salutes, which were so frequent, . . . that it might be compared almost to a train of wild-fire laid from one end of the empire to the other."

No part of this long voyage was ever dull ; to Aenius Anderson, the most ordinary Chinese landscape seemed entrancing :

" A city, at a distance of two miles from the river, surrounded with meadows and orchards, and a very pretty small town, with several detached villages scattered about it, were the only objects which gratified our attention in the early part of the day. As we proceeded, the prospect was more delightful than the imagination can conceive ; not merely for the beauty of the objects, but their contrast to each other. On one side of the river a verdant plain of vast extent, covered with herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, stretched on to a range of lofty mountains that rose boldly to the horizon ; while the whole country on the opposite side of the river was shaded with forests, in whose openings we could distinguish the humble cottage of the peasant, and painted palace of the Mandarin."

Flat fertile country, " as beautiful as cultivation could make it " was succeeded by rugged mountainous landscapes, where streams poured down through leafy chasms, where towering pagodas were set fantastically on the summits of pyramidal rocks, and " airy buildings and hanging gardens " were perched on the picturesque wooded heights. The scenery was sometimes " singular and stupendous," sometimes " romantic and delightful " ; adjectives fail him, its beauty was " beyond any exertion of verbal description." Yet his enthusiasm somehow inspires his stilted eighteenth-century diction ; few travellers have succeeded in giving so fascinating a picture of the vast land of China as this obscure valet.

As the Englishmen drew near Canton, the festivities in their honour became increasingly elaborate. The climax was staged in the most dramatic landscape that had been seen during the whole voyage :

" In the evening, the hills gradually approached the river, till, at length, they closed upon it, and formed a rude and lofty barrier, which, at once, confined and obscured its channel. This scenery continued for a considerable distance, as it were, on purpose to lead the eye to a mountain of such stupendous magnitude, as the description which I am about to give, will not be able to convey, I fear, to the mind of my readers. It was so late as seven o'clock at night before we arrived at the commencement of it ; but the moon shone in all her splendour, and enabled the eye to trace every part of this enormous object with less distinctness, perhaps, as to minute parts, but with better effect as to its magnificent outline.

" The mountain rises from the river to the perpendicular height of at least three hundred yards. The face it presents towards the water is divided between bare rock and shaggy foliage : the upper part appears, in some places, to project over the river, and offers a most tremendous shape to the voyagers who sail beneath it : when, therefore, to such an



elevation of solid rocky mountain, with its rugged base, and craggy summits, is added the extent of near two miles of lengthening precipice, some faint notion may be entertained of this stupendous object. . . .

"But it was the peculiar office of this extraordinary night to awaken our astonishment by the grand exertions of art, as well as by the enormous works of nature ; for, at the conclusion of this chain of hills, that had so long excluded any view into the country, we were surprised with a line of light that extended for several miles over mountains and valleys, at some distance from the river, and formed one uninterrupted blazing outline as they rose or sunk in the horizon.

"In some parts of this brilliant, undulating line, it was varied and thickened, as it appeared by large bands or groups of torches ; and, on the most conspicuous heights immense bonfires threw their flames towards the clouds. Nor was this all, for the lights did not only give the outline of the mountain, but sometimes serpentised up it, and connected, by a spiral stream of light, a large fire blazing at the bottom, with that which reddened the summit. . . .

"Whether these lights were held by an army of soldiers, and a very large one would have been necessary on the occasion, or were fixed in the ground, I could not learn ; but it was certainly the most magnificent illumination ever seen by the European traveller, and the most splendid compliment ever paid to the public dignity of an European Ambassador. Not only a vast range of country, but the course of the river, for several miles, received the light of day from this artificial blaze. Successive discharges of artillery were, at regular distances, added to the honour of this amazing and most superb spectacle."

Such was the Celestial Empire, a land hardly less marvellous than the Cathay of mediæval imagination. Yet the British, imprisoned in Canton, trading under crippling restrictions, consigned to the status of barbarian vassals, were still unable to profit from its riches. Lord Macartney, although fêted and flattered, had come away without securing a single concession ; Lord Amherst, a second ambassador sent to Peking twenty-five years later, was not accorded even these meaningless courtesies. The old question of the kow-tow wrecked his mission. Macartney had managed to obtain exemption from this ceremony, though he was none the less treated as a tribute bearer ; Amherst, a less subtle diplomat, bungled his preliminary discussions on this subject with the Manchu officials, and was dismissed from China without being granted an audience with the Emperor.

After this the war envisaged by Mr. Walter and so many other frustrated Europeans could not be long delayed. With the industrial revolution at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British became more than ever eager to expand their overseas commerce. The period of chartered trading companies was over. In 1834 the East India Company's

monopoly of the China trade was abolished, and then no longer a punctilious closed society, but a whole nation of greedy competing individuals was battering at the doors of China. A dispute over the importation of opium was the final excuse for conflict. It had always been difficult to find products which were acceptable in the oriental countries, particularly in China, with her wealth of raw materials, her high standard of craftsmanship, and her dislike of innovations. This problem was largely solved when British merchants discovered that opium, purchased in India, could be profitably sold in China. The trade was, of course, illegal, and was conducted, at least in theory, without the knowledge of the British government. Trading in opium was also against the laws of China; but after the reign of Ch'ien Lung, the Manchu dynasty, and with it the whole administration of the country, fell into decay, and corrupt officials connived at smuggling opium into the country in ever-increasing quantities. At last, in 1839, a special commissioner was sent to Canton to stamp out the trade, and the foreign merchants had to surrender their stocks of opium for destruction. This appeared to the British as an outrage. In the following year war broke out. The Chinese, with their old-fashioned, decorative armies, were easily defeated; in 1842 they were compelled to sign a treaty whereby they granted the British all the desired trading privileges, ceded to them the island of Hong-Kong, and opened five ports—Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai—to foreign commerce. Other western nations, headed by America and France, hastened to secure for themselves similar treaties.

These were only the first of a series of treaties by which the western powers attempted to reduce China to the status of an international colony. The 1842 concessions were actually more significant to the defeated Chinese than to the triumphant Europeans. Peking was, after all, still a closed city; foreigners were still regarded as barbarians, were not allowed to travel into the interior, or to reside outside the five treaty ports. None the less, numbers of Englishmen went to China to take advantage of these limited privileges, and various books appeared describing their limited and not always very interesting experiences. One of the few English travellers who at this, or indeed at any other, time wrote a living account of China was Robert Fortune, who in 1848 was sent by the East India Company to procure from China varieties of tea plants for the Government Tea Plantations in the Himalayas.

*Robert Fortune*<sup>1</sup>; *A Journey to the Tea Countries of China*. (Pub. 1852.)

Robert Fortune, like Thomas Manning, the traveller to Lhasa,<sup>2</sup> was

<sup>1</sup> *Robert Fortune* (1813-1880), traveller and botanist. He went to China for the first time in 1842 as collector for the Royal Horticultural Society. As a result of his expedition to collect tea plants in 1848, he introduced 2,000 plants and 17,000 sprouting seeds into the north-west provinces of India. In a later journey to the East he visited Formosa and Japan as well as China.

<sup>2</sup> See Asia.

one of those exceptional Englishmen endowed with an instinctive understanding of China. He had determined to procure plants from the celebrated Hwei-chow tea country, about two hundred miles inland from Shanghai, a district never before visited by any European, except possibly by Jesuit missionaries. In order to circumvent regulations, Fortune, abetted by his servants, travelled in secret, wearing Chinese clothes. The disguise was perhaps not very adequate, but Fortune made up for this by his natural aptitude for slipping, unnoticed, into the Chinese way of life. Unpretentious and unassuming, devoid of any sense of racial or class superiority, he conformed with pleasure to the elaborate courtesies which were practised among even the poorest Chinese; enjoyed the leisurely formal conversations, the ceremonious smoking and tea drinking with humble priests and peasants. Everywhere he made friends, was accepted, and entertained and protected. No doubt the Chinese trusted him, because, unlike most Europeans who came to China at this period, he was disinterested. The tea plants he had been commissioned to acquire for the Company were little to ask from the huge wealth of China; for himself, he wanted nothing except the seeds of flowers and trees unknown in Europe. Botany was his chief interest; and he had that love of nature, characteristic both of the English and the Chinese, which should have become a link between the two peoples, but most lamentably has been forgotten amid political and commercial disputes.

Sailing through the rivers and lakes and canals of the interior like Aenius Anderson he delighted in the changing landscape, the rich fields and romantic wooded hills, the towering pagodas, the ruins and rocks and mountains. But his view of China was more intimate than that of Macartney and his staff, for his experience was not of imperial entertaining, Mandarins' palaces and extravagant spectacles, but of the everyday traditional life of China, the life of toiling coolies, dirty, hospitable inns, gossiping tea shops and popular festivals.

Crowded in a flat-bottomed river boat with some Chinese merchants, a dwarf, a wealthy opium smoker, numerous servants and boatmen, and a heavy cargo, he travelled, peacefully if uncomfortably, sometimes leaving the boat to stroll along the banks, through the lovely Chinese landscapes south-west of Hangchow:

"Buddhist temples and pagodas were observed, here and there, rising high above the trees; one of the latter is called Lui-foong-ta, or the 'temple of the thundering winds.' It stands on the borders of the Se-hoo lake, and appeared to be a very ancient edifice. Wild briars and other weeds were growing out of its walls, even up to its very summit, and it was evidently fast going to decay. It formed a striking feature of

the landscape, and reminded me of those ancient castle ruins which are so common on the borders of England and Scotland."

.....

"Thus day after day passed pleasantly by; the weather was delightful, the natives quiet and inoffensive, and the scenery picturesque in the highest degree. My Chinaman and myself, often footsore and weary, used to sit down on the hill-top and survey and enjoy the beautiful scenery around us. The noble river, clear and shining, was seen winding amongst the hills; here it was smooth as glass, deep and still, and there shallow, and running rapidly over its rocky bed. At some places trees and bushes hung over its sides, and dipped their branches into the water, while at others rocks reared their heads high above the stream, and bade defiance to its rapid current."

This journey was memorable for his discovery of the weeping cypress (*cupressus funebris*), which he introduced to Europe:

"But the most beautiful tree found in this district is a species of weeping cypress, which I had never met with in any part of China, and which was quite new to me. It was during one of my daily rambles that I saw the first specimen. About half a mile distant from where I was I observed a noble-looking fir-tree, about sixty feet in height, having a stem as straight as the Norfolk Island pine, and weeping branches like the willow of St. Helena. Its branches grew at first at right angles to the main stem, then described a graceful curve upwards, and bent again at their points. From these main branches others long and slender hung down perpendicularly, and gave the whole tree a weeping and graceful form. It reminded me of some of those large and gorgeous chandeliers, sometimes seen in theatres and public halls in Europe.

"This specimen was fortunately covered with a quantity of ripe fruit, a portion of which I was most anxious to secure. The tree was growing in some grounds belonging to a country inn, and was the property of the innkeeper. A wall intervened between us and it, which I confess I felt very much inclined to get over; but remembering that I was acting Chinaman, and that such a proceeding would have been very indecorous, to say the least of it, I immediately gave up the idea. We now walked into the inn, and seating ourselves quietly down at one of the tables, ordered some dinner to be brought to us. When we had taken our meal we lighted our Chinese pipes, and sauntered out, accompanied by our polite host, into the garden where the real attraction lay. 'What a fine tree this of yours is! We have never seen it in the countries near the sea where we come from; pray give us some of its seeds.' 'It is a fine tree,' said the man, who was evidently much pleased with our admiration of it, and readily complied with our request. These seeds were care-



fully treasured ; and as they got home safely, and are now growing in England, we may expect in a few years to see a new and striking feature produced upon our landscape by this lovely tree."

In the Hwei-chow tea country, where the dark green tea bushes on the hill slopes contrasted vividly with the patches of ripening corn, he came to a remote town on the day of a festival. Here a theatre had been erected in one of those artificial settings so beloved of the Chinese, a popular version, probably largely made of paper, of those magnificent constructions that Macartney had seen in the palace gardens of the wealthy Mandarins :

"The town was on the opposite bank. Two rivers unite here, and the town was built between them just at their junction. One of the rivers was nearly dry, and its bed was now used for the purpose of giving a grand fête. The bank where we were was probably about one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet above the bed of the river, so that we had a capital view of what was going on below us.

"The first and most prominent object which caught my eye was a fine seven-storied pagoda, forty or fifty feet high, standing on the dry bed of the river ; near to it was a summer house upon a small scale, gaudily got up, and supposed to be in a beautiful garden. Artificial figures of men and women appeared sitting in the verandahs and balconies, dressed in the richest costumes. Singing birds, such as the favourite wame and canaries, were whistling about the windows. Artificial lakes were formed in the bed of the river, and the favoured nelumbium appeared floating on the water. Everything denoted that the place belonged to a person of high rank and wealth.

"At some little distance a theatre was erected, in front of which stood several thousands of the natives, packed as close as possible, and evidently highly interested in a play which was going on. Sometimes the piece appeared so pathetic that the immense multitude were perfectly still ; at other times something seemed to tickle their fancies, and to afford them the greatest amusement. The actors on the stage were very gaily dressed in rich silks and satins of many colours, and evidently did their best to afford amusement to this immense audience.

"Such was the scene presented to us as we approached the town. 'Come,' said all my fellow passengers, 'come and see the play' ; and they set off as fast as they could to a bridge a little higher up the river, . . .

"I was quite satisfied with the view I had of the whole scene from the opposite bank, and therefore declined the invitation to go nearer. The old dwarf, whom I have already mentioned, and who had taken every opportunity in his power to show his good will, volunteered to remain with me and my two servants."

On his return from this secret journey Fortune spent a short time in the treaty ports before venturing inland again on an expedition to another famous tea country, the Bohea mountains. While staying in Foochow he visited a celebrated beauty spot, the Buddhist temple of Koo-shan, high in the mountains, from which he had a magnificent view of those contrasting features of the Chinese landscape that never fail to amaze European travellers: the wild scenery, and the organised industry of the people:

"The old priest now led me to a different part of the grounds, to see a famous spring. This was in one of the most romantic looking dells or ravines that I had ever beheld. We descended to it by a flight of stone steps, crossed a bridge which spanned the ravine, and found ourselves in front of a small temple. On one side of it the water was gushing down, clear and cool, from the mountain, into a small cistern placed there to receive it; while on the other a cauldron or large kettle was always boiling during the day, in order that tea might readily be made for visitors. Here a number of priests were lounging about, apparently attached to the temple. They received me with great kindness, and begged me to be seated at a table in the porch. One of them took a cup and filled it with water at the spring, and brought it to me to taste. They all praised its virtues; and it certainly was excellent water. I told them it was the best I had ever tasted, and they then brought me a cup of tea made with the water from the same spring.

"After drinking the tea I wandered away along a paved path that led me round the side of the mountain, amidst vegetation which had been planted and reared by the hand of nature alone. . . .

"My progress was at last arrested by a steep precipice where the walk ended, and on the top of which a summer-house had been erected. I entered the house, and sat down upon one of the benches placed there for visitors. The view which I now obtained was one of the grandest I had seen for many a day. Above me, towering in majestic grandeur, was the celebrated peak of Koo-shan, one thousand feet higher than where I stood. Below, I looked down upon rugged and rocky ravines, in many places barren, and in others clothed with trees and brushwood, but perfectly wild. To afford, as it were, a striking contrast to this scenery, my eye next rested on the beautiful valley of the Min, in which the town of Foo-chow-foo stands. The river was winding through it, and had its surface studded with boats and junks sailing to and fro, and all engaged in active business. Its fields were green, and were watered by numerous canals; while in the background to this beautiful picture were hills nearly as high as Koo-shan, from amongst which the river runs, and where it is lost to the eye.

"A sight which is much prized by the Chinese is the view of the sunrise

from the peak of Koo-shan. Many sleep in the temple, and by torch-light reach the summit of the mountain in time to see the rising sun."

The human network of Chinese civilisation, ceaselessly active, organised and efficient, untouched by the industrialism of the West, was a constant source of astonishment. The inland trade, conducted by ancient patient methods, covered the whole country; a wild pass in the Bohea mountains was as busy as a city street:

"Just before we arrived at the top the road was so steep that even Chinese travellers get out of their chairs and walk, a proceeding unusual with them on ordinary occasions. From the foot of the range to the pass at which we had now arrived the distance was twenty *le*, or about five miles.

"This pass is a busy thoroughfare. . . . Long trains of coolies were met or overtaken at every turning of the road. Those going northward were laden with chests of tea, and those going south carried lead and other products for which there is a demand in the tea country. Travellers in chairs were also numerous, . . . Whether I looked up towards the pass, or down on the winding pathway by which I had come, a strange and busy scene presented itself. However numerous the coolies, or however good the road, I never observed any two of them walking abreast, as people do in other countries; each followed his neighbour, and in the distance they resembled a colony of ants on the move.

"At every quarter of a mile, or sometimes less, there is a tea-shop, for the refreshment of those who are toiling up or down the mountain. We frequently stopped at these places on our way, and refreshed ourselves with a cup of the pure bohea on its native mountains. . . .

"We arrived at last at the celebrated gates of huge doors which divide the provinces of Fokien and Kiang-see. The pillars of these gates have been formed by nature, and are nothing less than the 'everlasting hills' themselves. The arched doorways of the place bore a great resemblance to the gates of a Chinese city. As we passed through the archway I observed a guard of soldiers lounging about, but they did not take any notice of us, or attempt to examine our baggage. We were soon through the pass, and in another province. The province of Kiang-see had been shut out and left behind us, and our view now opened on Fokien. Never in my life had I seen such a view as this, so grand, so sublime. High ranges of mountains were towering on my right and on my left, while before me, as far as the eye could reach, the whole country seemed broken up into mountains and hills of all heights, with peaks of every form."

The uneasy arrangement of 1842 could not endure very long. While the Chinese regarded these concessions as a hateful imposition, the Europeans were infuriated by a state of affairs that made it necessary

for a traveller collecting tea-plants to be smuggled into the country in disguise. Moreover, as at the end of the Ming dynasty, the imperial house had failed; the bureaucracy, the basis of law and order, had again become intolerably corrupt; China was once more ripe for a change of government. In 1851 discontent culminated in the Taiping rebellion, an upheaval which, but for the presence of the western powers, would no doubt have paved the way for the establishment of a new and more vigorous dynasty. At this moment, however, clashes were also taking place between Britain and China. In 1857 the British captured Canton, and the Chinese had no choice but to grant further privileges and concessions.<sup>1</sup> In 1860, when the Chinese still refused to allow diplomatic representation in Peking, the war was resumed; Lord Elgin, commanding a combined British and French force, marched on the capital; the Chinese army was again defeated, and the Emperor, the Universal Monarch, the Son of Heaven, had to fly into the country. As a reprisal for the murder of some prisoners, the Yüan-ming Yüan, the Round Bright Garden, symbol of celestial serenity and imperial power, was destroyed; the airy pavilions with their treasures of jade and porcelain, the fantastic baroque palaces built for Ch'ien Lung by Jesuit missionaries, with their intricate fountains and mechanical toys, were ruthlessly looted and burned.

According to the traditional pattern of Chinese history, the British, like the Manchus, should then have made themselves rulers of China, displaying a proper respect for Chinese culture and institutions, and in time have become absorbed by the people they had defeated. It happened, however, that the British had no ambition to rule the country, no interest in Chinese culture, no desire, either, to impose that of Europe; in short they had no intention of accepting any responsibility that might distract them from the vital business of trade. After two centuries of suppressed conflict they had secured, in the treaty of 1860, everything they wanted: diplomatic representation in Peking, extra-territorial rights in their numerous treaty ports, freedom to move about the country, to take their ships up the rivers, to sell opium, in fact, to make as much money as possible. Having achieved this victory they withdrew their forces from Peking, handed back Canton, allowed the Manchus to return to their ruined palaces, and resumed their rôle of peaceful traders. But if they had refrained from conquering the country, they had shattered Chinese political tradition, and they were not disposed to allow anything to replace it. Their policy was to uphold the lawful, if discredited, government, to repress rebellions, to prevent any change in the social structure. With their support the incompetent Manchus remained in power for another half-century. Meanwhile, China, exploited

<sup>1</sup>Treaties of Tientsin, 1858.



and humiliated, her natural evolution thwarted, kept in an artificial, unhealthy state of peace, rotted inwardly.

During this sad period of Chinese history Englishmen of all kinds swarmed into the country: soldiers, sailors, explorers, missionaries, sportsmen, business men, traders and government officials, steamed up and down the rivers, tramped over the vast territories of the interior with gun and bible, were carried in chairs to stare at pagodas and waterfalls, gossiped over tiffin in their homey concessions, soaked gin and bitters in innumerable clubs and messes and bars. As China had for so long been a land of mystery, many of them felt obliged to write books about it, some who would never have written a line in any other circumstances; apparently almost any book on China could find a publisher during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

It is indeed regrettable that China should have been made known to the English public at this decadent period, and moreover, through the eyes of travellers who were particularly unqualified to appreciate the country. The mood of the nineteenth-century imperialists, self-assured, heartily optimistic, either arrogant or breezily patronising towards the peoples they controlled, was extremely blinding, as may also be deduced from the dreadful descriptions of India and Africa written at the same period. The earliest imperialists were humbled by their helplessness; Chancellor at the court of Ivan the Terrible, James Lancaster at the courts of eastern princelings, even John Smith in the presence of the savage Red Indian chieftain Powhatan, were forced to understand, to tolerate, if possible, to sympathise, because they were not strong enough to assert themselves by force. But the men who ruled India, who annexed negro kingdoms, who imposed themselves on China, having the army and navy and mighty wealth of Britain behind them, had no need to study, or even to consider the character of their subject peoples. The eighteenth-century conception of the rights of man had been superseded by the legend of the white man, which Cecil Rhodes elevated to its zenith; the white man, carrying a burden, it is true, but innately superior to any other man on earth.

Few of the nineteenth-century travellers to China took China seriously.<sup>1</sup> Cathay the marvellous had become one of the backward nations; the Chinese had become the natives. Volume after volume tells of John Chinaman with his funny little pigtail—a fashion which actually had been introduced only by the Manchus—his funny little chopsticks, his quaint nasty habit of eating birds' nests and old eggs, his naughty sing-song girls, his depraved enslavement to opium. Most of these accounts are good-humoured; the English could afford to be good-

<sup>1</sup> There were, of course, notable exceptions, as for instance H. A. Giles, LL.D., the great Chinese scholar, who spent many years in China in the Consular Service.

humoured towards a race which was so innocuously inept. Moreover many of them had a wonderful time in China. Chinese self-indulgence was a relaxation permissible to the heavily burdened white man, especially when living was so cheap, and the white man was making such good money. Not only the commercial magnates, but almost every Englishman in China lived regally. Consuls, for instance, or employees in the Chinese Customs Service,<sup>1</sup> an organisation in which foreigners acted as agents of the Chinese government for the collection of maritime customs, were able to enjoy lives beyond their hopes in Europe; small clerks were intoxicated by an access of authority and pleasure.

*The Chinese Confessions of C. W. Mason.*

Charles Mason, the twenty-five-year-old son of a Kentish school-master, writes rapturously of the amenities afforded to him in 1890 by the salary of a junior official in the Customs Service: eight servants, costing less than £100 a year; Mongolian ponies at £5 each; duty-free cigars at five and seven shillings a hundred; champagne for dinner every evening, sing-song girls at two Mexican dollars a night. His career, in his own words, "seemed to offer an endless vista of self-expansion and enjoyment"; without exertion, he would be promoted, step by step, until he reached the post of commissioner, which may seem to us, none the less, to have been an exceptionally dreary pinnacle of success:

"At the end of thirty years of this idle life, if I lived, I might become, like Kopsch, a Commissioner, drawing a thousand dollars a month, with every possible thing found, . . . a high Mandarin ranking with the Taotai, the lord of the port, to whom foreign consuls were ornamental nobodies; controlling absolutely a staff of half a dozen European gentlemen—and their wives—a dozen silk clad shupans, two dozen stalwart tide-waiters, and a score of robust native boat-men, and with nothing to do but sit in melancholy grandeur scraping a violon-cello in a darkened drawing room, and doctor a jaundiced liver with a diet cheaper and simpler than a coolie's. . . . These great men never spoke, they did not say 'Come' and he cometh; 'Go' and he goeth. They raised a languid and jaundiced eye, and the fat pony was brought forth or the great green chair marshalled at the door with its liveried bearers; they extended a feeble and emaciated hand, and chits went out summoning assistants and consuls to a great banquet, at which, while behind each guest stood a silk-clad boy with a magnum of pommery swathed in a white napkin, the host sipped boiled water, and turned

<sup>1</sup> Not all the Englishmen employed in this organisation were so philistine. Sir Robert Hart, for instance, the head of the Service, had a great understanding of the old imperial China, and was highly respected by the Chinese.

his weary eyes on the eager young wives who obtruded their white bosoms and flashing glances on the jaded lord whose nod could add a hundred dollars a month to their husbands' salaries—or consign them to Tamsai or Swatow."

Europeans were at last come free to enjoy the luxury of Cathay; but theirs was luxury without learning, self-indulgence without taste. Such men floated flamboyantly and aimlessly on the surface of Chinese civilisation, ignorant of everything of which it was composed: its literature, its art, and its philosophy. Inevitably, they grew more dimly decadent than the most effete of the Chinese; banquets, opium and sing-song girls were succeeded by morphia, murder, and, finally, an annihilating boredom. The British Consul at Chinkiang was one of these; although he appeared to Mason "the most insignificant and humble individual in the world, shabbily and shapelessly dressed to conceal the fact that he was a veritable pocket Hercules, and so weary and dreary, with melancholy eyes 'flapping from out their condor wings unutterable woe,' that it was generally supposed that his life had been painfully uneventful, and that he had never known a woman or used a gun."

"I strolled up the hill that afternoon and mounted the stately steps of the imposing white mansion which had promptly replaced the one burnt down by the rioters in 1889. The British Raj does not allow the little indignations of a few hundred million Asiatics to interrupt its solemn dignity.

Watson, like his predecessor Oxenham, was a bachelor consul—a thing that really ought not to be allowed in small outposts, for bachelors are always miserly. The palatial mansion stood empty and lifeless, although its pillared verandah and polished hall were spotlessly neat and inviting. A mournful old butler informed me that I should probably find the *Ta Ingwo Ling-su* in the back garden. I strolled round to the hill park and presently perceived Watson looking up intently in the foliage of a tall tree. After a while he raised a single-barrelled pistol and fired: the report was very slight, and I took it to be a 22 'saloon' pistol, which I considered a toy. I saw nothing fall, but he searched the ground carefully and seemed to pick up something.

Then he repeated the same performance at another tree, after which he dropped the pistol in a side pocket and sighed like one weary of the world.

I approached him laughing. 'What on earth are you doing?'

'Oh I was only picking off a few cicadas,' he said wearily. 'They make such a noise, you know!'

'And did you kill any?'

I inquired with playful scepticism; for a cicada is no bigger than a locust, and although you may hear them loudly,

few people, even with glasses, have ever seen one, for they are of the colour of the trees, and like squirrels cling out of sight.

He put his hand in the other side pocket and drew out a handful. 'I had intended burning them,' he said, 'but I suppose burying will do,' and he scraped a hole with his heel and covered them over."

During the tea-drinking that followed it was revealed that this brilliant shot had also shot tigers in Fukien, and his wife's lover in a duel—a story that delighted Mason. Their conversation was altogether on a very tough level :

" ' By the way, do you smoke ? ' "

' Opium,' I retorted defiantly.

' That is bad,' he said, ' But it is better than morphia.' He pushed up his sleeve, and then, covering the tell-tale pricks, lit a pipe of tobacco."

Charles Mason, however, was not satisfied with the prospect of a life-time of idleness, opulence and sensation-seeking. The luxury of China made many obscure Englishmen feel like princes ; in Mason it produced a more active megalomania, an ambition no less than to become Emperor of China and so ruler of the world. His *Confessions* tell the story of petty intrigues and grand hallucinations. Plotting with the Ko Lao Hui, one of the many revolutionary movements that sprang up in China during this period, Mason planned to overthrow the feeble Chinese government and put himself at the head of the state. But he never had even the excitement of participating in an uprising. By suicidal bungling, such as confiding in chance acquaintances and wilfully blowing up some fellow-conspirators in order to test a supply of dynamite, he gave away his own secrets ; eventually he was caught and arrested by the British for smuggling arms to the rebels and ended in prison.

Secret societies, such as that which led astray the crazy dreamer Charles Mason, were numerous during these last years of the Manchu dynasty, yet the revolution was delayed until 1911. Meanwhile China suffered every degradation short of conquest. In 1895 Japan, following the western fashion, defeated China in a brief walk-over war, and secured, among other territorial concessions, Formosa. More ports, and large slices of territory were subsequently leased to the western powers, who competed greedily and ruthlessly for mining and railway concessions. By the end of the century Britain, France, Germany, Russia and Japan had divided up the country into "spheres of influence," so that when the anticipated collapse of China took place, each nation could appropriate its share without dispute. The efforts of the Chinese to save their country were largely



ineffective ; belated and inexperienced reforms were consistently frustrated by the determined reactionary stateswoman, the Empress Dowager, who until her death in 1908 was virtually ruler of the country. The Boxer Rising of 1900, a blind and bloodthirsty attempt to drive out all foreigners, only resulted in Peking being again occupied, and again looted, by western troops. Four years later Japan once more brought her army into Chinese territory, this time for the purpose of preventing Russia from annexing Manchuria. No doubt it was only the savage jealousies of the western powers, their fear of war between themselves, that prevented them from partitioning China. China survived as a theoretically independent state because she had at least five enemies instead of one.

The Chinese revolution, inspired by the Three Principles of Dr. Sun Yat-sen : National Independence, Democracy, and Livelihood of the People, was a national awakening, a resumption of progressive civilisation. The immediate result, however, was anarchy and civil war. It was not until 1927 that a competent government, the Kuomintang, led by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, emerged from the contending factions. Thenceforth, reconstruction and reform painfully but steadily went forward, so that when the well-equipped and modernised Japanese army invaded northern China in 1937, the nation was able to put up an organised defence. This war, which would have completely crushed a people less resilient and resourceful, revealed the fundamental qualities of the Chinese ; their nine years-long resistance, maintained in spite of a cruel shortage of arms and supplies, united their country, and earned for them not merely the respect, but the admiration of those Europeans who had misunderstood and underrated them for more than two centuries.

*W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood ; Journey to a War. (Pub. 1939.)*

Numerous English writers and journalists have reported the grim heroic fighting of the Chinese, and their indomitable industry that once made China the most prosperous land on earth, and now served the vital purpose of keeping the nation alive. W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood were spectators of the war in 1938, in its early phase, before Britain, ironically enough, had become an ally of China and a victim of the same enemy. Leaving the security of Hong-Kong—a security which was to prove wholly fictitious—they sailed up the Canton river, past the forts despised long ago by Weddell and Anson, and now effectively resisting the Japanese, and crossed, by appalling train journeys, the landscape that had delighted Aenius Anderson and Robert Fortune, travelling commodiously by the now ruined waterways.

In Shantung, in northern China, they reached the front lines, looked down on the Grand Canal through which Macartney had once glided marvelling at the serene prosperity and luxury of the countryside :

"Liu Chuan was full of soldiers, but we met no troops on the road beyond—only an occasional army lorry and groups of refugee peasants going south, laden with sacks. The low empty hills crowded in ; we climbed slowly to the top of a shallow, stony pass. Here and there, in the middle distance, we saw a sentry posted at some vantage-point which commanded the windings of the track. . . .

From the top of the pass the view opened. We were looking down the slopes to Li Kwo Yi, with the Grand Canal beyond, and the valley where Han Chwang must lie : not a shot to be heard, not a puff of smoke to be seen—the meadows still and peaceful in the afternoon sun, the blossom beginning on the hill-sides, and, in the distance, a blue range of mountains. Auden made me laugh by saying thoughtfully : ' I suppose if we were over there we'd be dead.'

From here we looked down on War as a bird might—seeing only a kind of sinister agriculture or anti-agriculture. Immediately below us peasants were digging in the fertile, productive plain. Further on there would be more peasants, in uniform ; also digging—the unproductive sterile trench. Beyond them, to the north, still more peasants ; and once again, the fertile fields. This is how war must seem to the neutral, unjudging bird—merely the Bad Earth, the tiny, dead patch in the immense flowering field of luxuriant China.

' Surely,' I exclaimed, ' that horse is green ? ' And so it was. We overtook the soldier who was riding it. He explained that all army horses, if they were white, are camouflaged this way against aircraft. He told us, also, that we shouldn't be able to get to Han Chwang : the northern part of the village is actually in the hands of the Japanese. The southern half, on this side of the canal, is in the Chinese front lines."

During the next eight years the Bad Earth was to spread, a sinister and bloody blight, over hundreds of square miles of fertile China. But with the loss of fields, cities, and uncounted lives, one thing of great significance was gained. The revocation of the Unequal Treaties in January 1943 put an end at last to European exploitation, that base realisation of the mediæval aspiration for the riches of Cathay. Now, China, victorious, liberated both from armies and concession hunters, vigorous and progressive, may again become the land of marvels, which Europeans came near to destroying because they envied it so much.

## PART II

### TRAVELLING TO THE WEST

#### 6. WEST AFRICA AND THE WEST INDIES

WHILE the East was regarded as a source of immeasurable wealth a region likely to yield an unlimited supply of gold and diamonds, rubies that shone through the night as brilliantly as sunbeams, emeralds, pearls, spices of all kinds, and silk that grew plentifully in the forests,<sup>1</sup> Englishmen were slow to realise the possibilities of America. John Cabot, exploring in the service of Henry VII, probably reached the mainland of America in the same year as did Columbus<sup>2</sup>; but this voyage had no sequel: with their minds fixed on the fabulous treasures of the East, the English devoted themselves to the search for Arctic routes to Cathay, leaving the Spaniards to scoop, unmolested, the vast wealth of the New World. The discovery of the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru,<sup>3</sup> which made the Bullion Warehouse of Seville the wonder of Europe, failed to distract Englishmen from this hopeless quest for many years; when Willoughby and Chancellor set out to explore the North-east Passage no further venture to America had been undertaken, and Martin Frobisher attempted to round the northern coast of America before any attempt had been made to colonise the continent.<sup>4</sup>

When John Hawkins<sup>5</sup> established intercourse between England and America in 1562, he was enticed not by any dream of fantastic wealth, but by a shrewd estimate of the profit to be made from dealing in slaves, "Master John Hawkins," wrote Hakluyt, "having made divers voyages.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Eden's *A Treatise of the newe India*, 1553 (see America).

<sup>2</sup> Cabot probably reached the mainland on his second voyage to America in 1498 (see America). Columbus first sighted the mainland only on his third voyage to America, which took place in the same year.

<sup>3</sup> Early in the sixteenth century. The silver of Potosi was discovered in 1545.

<sup>4</sup> Frobisher made his voyages between 1576 and 1578; the first attempt to found an English settlement in America was not until 1585 (see America).

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Hawkins, 1532-1595. He was a cousin of Francis Drake, who accompanied him on a slave trading voyage in 1567-9 (see The Pacific.)

to the isles of the Canaries, and there by his good and upright dealing being grown in love and favour with the people, informed himself among them, by diligent inquisition, of the state of the West India, . . . And being . . . assured that negroes were very good merchandise in Hispaniola, and that store of negroes might easily be had upon the coast of Guinea, resolved with himself to make trial thereof, and communicated that device with his worshipful friends in London." This sound scheme brought him wealth, fame, and honour, and a coat of arms, with a "demi-Moor, proper bound and captive," as his crest. It was for the more romantic and experimental Sir Walter Raleigh, who ended on the scaffold, to plant unsuccessful colonies in Virginia, and to struggle through the stifling forests of Guiana in the futile search for El Dorado, a land so rich in gold that the inhabitants powdered their bodies with its dust.<sup>1</sup> Hawkins, acting on sober trading reports instead of such fanciful travellers' tales, opened up for his countrymen a commerce as lucrative as any gold mine.

At that period slaves were the urgent and increasing need of the Spanish settlers. The practice of importing West African negroes had been begun early in the century, at the suggestion of the bishop Bartolomé de las Casas,<sup>2</sup> who, ironically enough, is remembered as one of the few humane characters in the history of Spanish colonisation. This celebrated friend and protector of the Indians advocated the importation of negro slaves as a means of saving the native American population from being exterminated by forced labour. He later repented of having given this advice, but Charles V had already granted to certain of his Flemish subjects a patent for supplying slaves to his American colonies, thereby inaugurating a trade which was to continue, to the great profit of the European seafaring nations, and especially England, for the next three hundred years.

No country benefited more by this modern slavery than England. The colonies of Virginia and the West Indies, which had ruined, starved and exhausted batch after batch of the early settlers, became prosperous and luxurious through the use of slave labour; and while the West Indian sugar-planters embellished their palatial homes with gilded mirrors and mahogany panelling, even greater fortunes were made by those who supplied the slaves. In spite of fierce foreign competition England managed to secure a major share of the trade. The Royal

<sup>1</sup> In 1595 (see America).

<sup>2</sup> Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566), "the Apostle of the Indians." In 1510 he took holy orders, the first to be granted in the New World. Some years later he returned to Spain to plead the cause of the Indians, and advised Charles V to import negro slaves into the American colonies. He afterwards admitted his mistake and fought for the abolition of slavery. His life was devoted to helping the Indians, but all his efforts were frustrated by the Spanish colonists.

He wrote several books, including *Historias de las Indias*.



African Company, founded by Charles II, with the King as governor, was one of the most prosperous of such enterprises ; early in the eighteenth century England acquired the much coveted *asiento*, the monopoly for supplying slaves to the Spanish colonies, and though the contract was later withdrawn, the activities of English slave traders steadily increased, so that in 1790 it was estimated that more than half the slaves sold to the Americas passed through English hands.

When Hawkins first brought England into the slave trade the patent originally granted by Charles V had been sold to some Genoese merchants, who had established a regular traffic across the Atlantic, buying the slaves from Portuguese agents on the West African coast. At this time England was still on good terms with Spain ; the commercial rivalry which was to keep the two countries in a state of declared and undeclared war for many decades had not yet developed. Although Hawkins was careful to trust his Spanish buyers "nor further than that by his own strength he was able to master them," he managed to dispose of what Hakluyt terms his "prey"—negroes obtained "partly by the sword partly by other means—" profitably and without opposition.<sup>1</sup>

But before his second voyage the Spanish government had sent out orders strictly forbidding the colonists in America and the Indies to trade with English merchants. His success, in spite of this prohibition, was a proof of what could be achieved in the New World by defying Spain. Hawkins acquired his cargo by the same means as before, burning and pillaging negro towns under the eyes of the jealous, and often hostile, Portuguese ; and compelled the Spanish in the Indies to buy them, on his own terms, by threat of arms. It was, in fact, a thoroughly brutal and unscrupulous expedition, mitigated only by an act of generosity to a starving French garrison, and the trivial honesty of paying some French seamen a fair price for some fish, but backed, like all Elizabethan enterprises, by an approving God : "Almighty God," wrote John Sparke, "who never suffereth his elect to perish, sent us the sixteenth of February the ordinary breeze which is the North-east wind," thus enabling them to cross the Atlantic without losing their lives or their cargo by thirst.

Sparke, the seaman who recounts the voyage, writes, however, more like a seventeenth-century traveller than an Elizabethan. Besides the usual stories of hunger and thirst and violent death, his narrative is full of detailed observation such as is found in the writing of Dallam or Peter Mundy : descriptions of negro and Indian tribes, their appearance, houses, and customs, of strange plants and fruits, and especially animals, in which, unlike most Elizabethan adventurers, he was interested for reasons other than their food value.

<sup>1</sup> Hawkins' first voyage is narrated in a short note written by Hakluyt.

*John Sparke ; The Voyage made by Mr. John Hawkins, afterwards knight, Captain of the Jesus of Lubeck, one of Her Majesty's ships, and General of the Salomon, and other two barques going in his company to the coast of Guinea and the Indies of Nova Hispania being in Africa and America : begun in A.D. 1564.*

Hawkins' second voyage was sponsored by the highest in the kingdom ; the Earl of Pembroke, and Robert Dudley, afterwards Earl of Leicester, were among those who financed him, and one of his ships was hired to him by Queen Elizabeth.

The first place of call was the Canary Islands—*Insula Fortunæ*—where Sparke saw, for the first time, that surprising animal, the camel, which he describes in a passage as vivid as Peter Mundy's account of his first ride on an elephant :

“His nature is contrary to other beasts ; of understanding very good, but of shape very deformed, with a little belly, long misshapen legs, and feet very broad of flesh, without a hoof, all whole, saving the great toe ; a back bearing up like a molehill, a large and thin neck, with a little head, with a bunch of hard flesh, which nature hath given him in his breast, to lean upon.”

Hawkins began his operations on the islands off the coast of Sierra Leone. At Sambula, which has been identified as Sherboro island, he was reasonably successful, going ashore every day to burn and spoil towns and capture the inhabitants. These were a weird-looking people known as the Samboses, who filed their teeth, and “to set themselves out, do jag their flesh, both legs, arms, and bodies, as workmanlike as a jerkin-master with us pinketh a jerkin.”

But though some of the tribes on this coast might have barbarous fashions, Sparke, like many later travellers, was favourably impressed by their customs and social organisation. Their towns were “prettily divided,” the houses being “built in a rank very orderly in the face of the street” ; justice was strictly administered ; and the much-valued palmito wine, drawn from trees that grew wild, was distributed by a system of communal rationing.

These negroes were brave fighters, and as yet comically unaware of the danger of firearms, as the Englishmen realised when pursuing them through the forest :

“So, going their way forward, till they came to a river which they could not pass over, they espied on the other side two men, who with their bows and arrows shot terribly at them. Whereupon we discharged certain arquebuses to them again, but the ignorant people weighed it not,

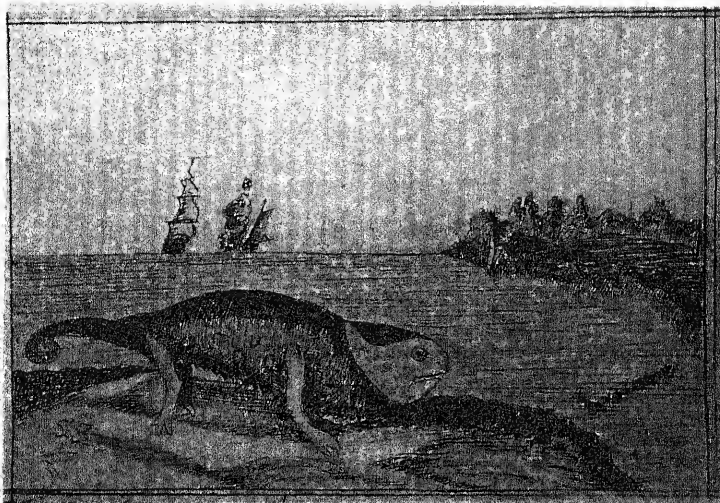
because they knew not the danger thereof ; but used a marvellous crying in their flight, with leaping and turning their tails that it was most strange to see, and gave us great pleasure to behold them."

To kidnap any considerable number from their well-organised communities was a dangerous business, made more risky by the Englishmen's reckless greed for plunder, and the treacherous inclinations of the Portuguese, who had to be used as guides. A raid on the town of Bymba, which was rumoured to be full of gold and poorly protected, ended in a humiliating disaster :

"We landing boat after boat, and divers of our men scattering themselves, contrary to the Captain's will, by one or two in a company, for the hope they had to find gold in their houses, ransacking the same, in the meantime the negroes came upon them, and hurt many (being thus scattered), whereas if five or six had been together, they had been able (as their companies did), to give the overthrow to forty of them, and being driven down to take their boats ; othersome not able to recover the same, took the water, and perished by means of the ooze. . . . Thus we returned back, somewhat discomfited, although the Captain in a singular and wise manner, with countenance very cheerful outwardly, as though he did little weigh the death of his men, nor yet the great hurt done to the rest, although his heart inwardly was broken in pieces for it, done to this end, that the Portingalls, being with him, should not presume to resist against him, nor take occasion to put him to further displeasure or hindrance for the death of our men ; having gotten by our going ten negroes and lost seven of our best men, whereof Master Field, captain of the *Salomon* was one, and we had twenty-seven of our men hurt."

Crossing the Atlantic, they were becalmed for twenty-one days, and had almost run out of water before God sent them the "ordinary breeze"—the trade wind—which carried them to Sancta Dominica, an island inhabited by cannibals, "the most desperate warriors in the West Indies," whom the Spaniards had never been able to subdue.

In the Spanish settlements Hawkins was immediately made to feel the effects of the new edict from Spain. The governor of Margarita not only declined to discuss the question of trade, but even refused to receive him. At Burboroata, a mainland town, on the coast of what is now Venezuela, he was able to dispose of "certain lean and sick negroes" only after considerable haggling. By spinning a hard luck story of having been driven to the coast by bad weather, and having no money left with which to pay his men, he eventually prevailed upon the governor to give him licence to trade, but trouble at once arose over the "King's custom," a duty of thirty ducats on each slave, and Hawkins was only



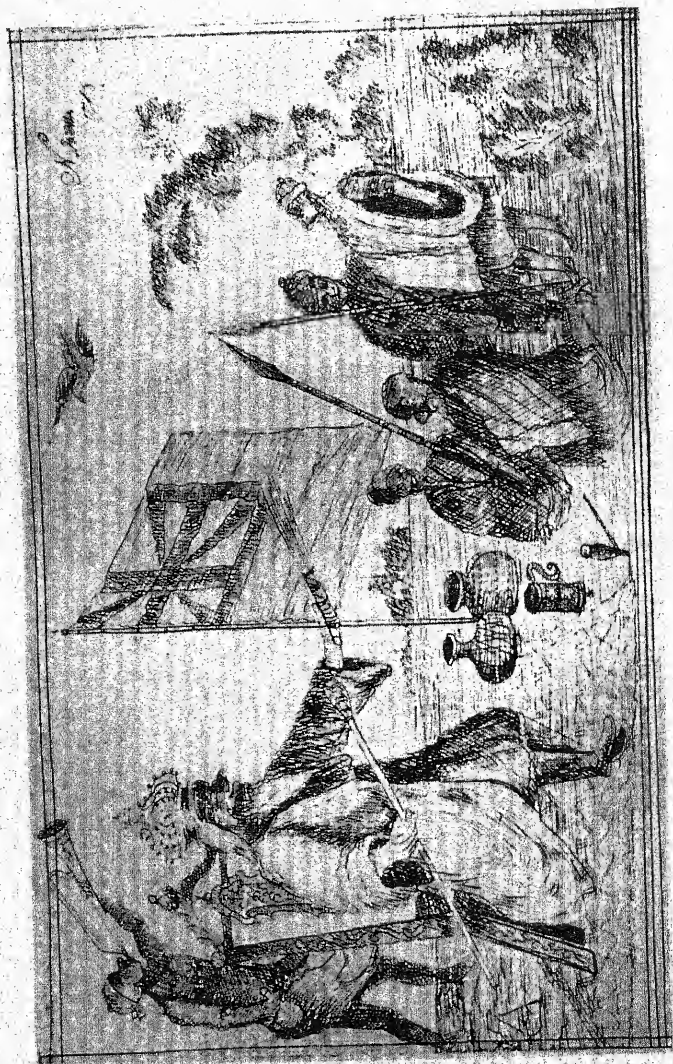
The Camelian given to Nicholas Owen by King Sumana.



Nicholas Owen's house on the river Sherboro.  
*From drawings by Nicholas Owen.*



PLATE XXII



Surry King of Sherboro.  
*From a drawing by Nicholas Owen*

able to get it reduced to the more reasonable figure represented by seven and a half per cent by marching towards the town with "one hundred men well armed with bows, arrows, arquebuses and pikes."

At the island of Aruba he told a similar story, with the added lie that he had enjoyed "quiet traffic" at Burboroata. But when the Spanish officials persisted in refusing his demands—"seeing that they would, contrary to all reason, go about to withstand his traffic"—he told them that they must either give him licence to trade "or else stand to their own harms." The Spanish replied to this threat with an offer to buy his slaves at price which was less than a half of what he had obtained at Burboroato. What followed can best be told in the spirited words of John Sparke :

"Whereupon the captain, weighing their unconscionable request, wrote them a letter that they dealt too rigorously with him, to go about to cut his throat in the price of his commodities, which were so reasonably rated, as they could not by a great deal have the like at any other man's hands. But seeing they had sent him this to his supper, he would in the morning bring them as good a breakfast. And therefore in the morning, being the twenty-first of May, he shot off a whole culverin to summon the town, and preparing one hundred men in armour, went ashore, having in his great boat two faulcons<sup>1</sup> of brass, and in the other boats double bases in their noses, which being perceived by the townsmen, they incontinent in battle array, with their drum and ensign displayed, marched from the town to the sands, with footmen to the number of an hundred and fifty, making great brags with their cries, and waving us ashore, whereby they made a semblance to have fought with us indeed. But our captain, perceiving them so brag, commanded the two faulcons to be discharged at them, which put them in no small fear to see (as they afterwards declared), such great pieces in a boat. At every shot they fell flat to the ground, and as we approached near unto them, they broke their array, and dispersed themselves so much for fear of the ordinance, that at last they went all away with their ensign. The horsemen, also, being about thirty, made as brave a show as might be, coursing up and down with their horses, their brave white leather targets in the one hand, and their javelins in the other, as though they would have received us at our landing. But when we landed, they gave ground, and consulted what they should do, for little they thought we should have landed so boldly; and, therefore, as the captain was putting his men in array, and marched forward to have encountered with them, they sent a messenger on horseback with a flag of truce to the captain, who declared that the treasurer marvelled what he meant to do, to come ashore in that order, in consideration that they had granted to

<sup>1</sup> faulcon : a light cannon.

every reasonable request that he did demand. But the captain, not well contented with this messenger, marched forward. The messenger prayed him to stay his men, and said if he would come apart from his men, the treasurer would come and speak with him, whereunto he did agree to commune together. The captain only with his armour without weapon, and the treasurer on horseback with his javelin, . . . and so keeping aloof communing together, granted in fine to all his requests."

In this way the object of the expedition was successfully accomplished. The return voyage was by Florida and Newfoundland. In Florida Hawkins relieved a garrison of French soldiers<sup>1</sup> who had been reduced from two hundred to forty men, and at the time when the English providentially arrived had only ten days' food left. Their plight was, as Sparke points out, largely their own fault, for "being soldiers they desired to live by the sweat of other men's brow," and preferred to plunder the peaceable Indians, driving them to murder and war, rather than cultivate the extremely fertile soil. According to Sparke, everything "serviceable to the use of man" abounded in Florida: grapes, fowls, fish, deer, maize, "apothecary herbs," and myrrh and frankincense. Gold and silver had at first been freely given away by the Indians, and some exceptionally large pearls, which, unfortunately, were black, for the Indians fished oysters in order to roast and eat them, attaching no value to the pearls. Unicorns' horns were to be had in plenty, for this animal, according to Sparke, was common in Florida, from which he deduced, with Lylyesque logic, that lions and tigers were likely to be found:

"Of beasts in this country besides deer, hares, polecats, coneyes, ounces, leopards, I am not able certainly to say; but it is thought that there are lions and tigers as well as unicorns; lions especially, if it be true that is said of the enmity between them and the unicorns. For there is no beast but hath his enemy, as the coney the polecat, the sheep the wolf, the elephant the rhinoceros; and so of other beasts the like, insomuch that whereas the one is the other cannot be missing."

Contrary winds delayed the voyage home, and food ran dangerously low; but near Newfoundland they had the luck to run into a couple of French ships laden with fish, from which they obtained enough to provide for the rest of the journey:

"... the next day we departed, and had lingering little gales for the space of four or five days, at the end of which we saw a couple of French ships, and had of them so much fish as would serve us plentifully for all the rest of the way, the Captain paying for the same both

<sup>1</sup> This settlement had been founded a few years earlier. It was subsequently wiped out by the Spaniards.

gold and silver, to the just value thereof, unto the chief owners of the said ships ; but they, not looking for anything at all, were glad in themselves to meet with such good entertainment at sea as they had at our hands. After which departure from them, with a good large wind the twentieth of September we came to Padstow in Cornwall, God be thanked, in safety, with the loss of twenty persons in the said voyage, and profitable to the venturers of the said voyage, as also to the whole realm, in bringing home both gold, silver, pearls, and other jewels great store. His name therefore be praised for evermore. Amen."

Englishmen had made themselves felt in the Indies, and had struck their first blow in the long war against Spain. In the course of the next fifty years England proved her naval superiority in the waters of Europe and of the New World, and in the beginning of the seventeenth century she began to take possession of the West Indian islands that were still unoccupied by her rival. The first English settlement was founded by Thomas Warner, who in 1625 landed on St. Christopher's with thirteen men. The colonisation of Nevis soon followed, and in 1627 Sir William Courteen, partner in the Anglo-Dutch firm of Courteen and Company, promoted, with other merchant adventurers, a settlement on Barbados. The early history of these islands was even more savage and turbulent than was usual in the colonising enterprises of the period. The rivalry of the French, who in 1625 planted themselves on half St. Christopher's, fierce attacks from the native Caribs, quarrels between the English settlers leading to murder and civil war, violent disputes between the settlers and the agents of Lord Carlisle—a spendthrift courtier whom Charles I inadvisedly appointed "Lord Proprietor of the Caribbee islands," and who tried to impose heavy taxes in return for armed protection which he never provided—finally, in 1629, the arrival of a Spanish armada which captured St. Christopher's and Nevis, devastated the plantations and despatched the settlers to England, were trials which made the terrible hardships of pioneering in the tropics of minor importance.

The English colonists luckily possessed an almost foolhardy tenacity. As soon as the Spaniards had left St. Christopher's and Nevis—they made no attempt to occupy the islands—the dispossessed settlers began to trickle back to their devastated homes. Even more surprisingly, these misfortunes did nothing to deter new colonists, who during the ensuing years continued to make their way across the Atlantic, often in small fleets, sometimes in a single ship. Among them was Sir Henry Colt, an admirable type of English gentleman, who had perhaps been driven to seek his fortunes abroad because he was a Roman Catholic. He came with one ship, well armed and supplied,



the *Alexander*; his intention was to start a plantation on St. Christopher's and make trading voyages to the Spanish settlements on the mainland. This was, of course, illegal, as the Spanish colonists were forbidden by law to buy from foreigners; but this ill-judged restriction was scarcely regarded: the colonists were unable to obtain all the goods they required from Spain, and English planters in the West Indies, then and later, made a good business out of supplying them.<sup>1</sup>

*The voyage of Sir Henry Colt knight to the Islands of the Antilles in the ship called Alexander whereof William Burch was Captain and Robert Shapton Master accompanied with divers captains and gentlemen of note (1631).*

The gentle and civilised Sir Henry Colt found much to criticise in the barbarous struggling colonies of the West Indies. In Barbados he was shocked by the brawling drunken habits of the settlers, and their suicidal neglect of the natural resources of the island. Incredible as it may seem, one of the most serious dangers threatening the first colonists was hunger, for they did not trouble to grow anything except tobacco, which they exported to England in exchange for food, with the result that when the ships bringing their provisions were lost or delayed, the whole settlement could be faced with starvation. Lack of labour was another reason for their difficulties. In these early days before the importation of slaves the plantations were worked by indentured servants, whose conditions were neither good enough nor bad enough to ensure hard work, but encouraged them to become lazy, disorderly and disloyal.

Meanwhile, the Spaniards were still menacing. Near St. Christopher's Sir Henry was engaged by two Spanish men-of-war, and there and on Nevis the settlers were preparing for a second attack. When the danger had subsided he landed on St. Christopher's, but conditions were so primitive in the barely recovered colony that he had to live in a tent while his men cut wood for building huts.

Sir Henry relates these trials and adventures with humour and detachment, revealing an engaging personality in strange contrast to the rude background of his story. Yet he is a characteristic figure of his period; one of those cultured gentlemen, like George Sandys, who was also a hard-boiled man of action, whose personal difficulties did not prevent him from looking at the world with an eager, impersonal curiosity, and who described his observations in highly coloured and spontaneously flowing language.

After sailing four weeks from England he notes:

<sup>1</sup> See Dampier (The Pacific).

"Upon this day the sun enters the tropic of cancer, whither we direct our course, and are approached within four degrees. Here can the sun direct us no more. Excuse me, you glorious star, if I be compelled to write of others that must supply thy place; for you are now just over our head, in the tropic of cancer, and in our zenith as thy shadow cannot give us our latitude, but the north star and *las guardas* for the time be our directors."

Two weeks later he calculated that he was near Barbados, which, however, was difficult to find:

"Barbados may well admit of this simile, to be like sixpence thrown down upon Newmarket Heath, and you should command such a one to go and find it out for it lies due west from such a place thirteen miles. Happy would your messenger be thought, if upon the full career of a horse he comes just to the place assigned him and there find it." . . .

The island, being low-lying, was hard to see from a distance:

"Friday the first of July between two and three a clock in the morning the master's boy from out the forecastle of the ship calls out land. The moon shines bright, for that night they had played at cards at tables upon the decks with no other light. But now I could discover nothing else but a dark cloud; and the worst of all is, that within this half hour the moon will hide herself, and leave us to darkness when we had most need of light. But resolved they are its land, but what land they know not. It stands upon us now heedfully to look about us, more longing for daylight, than the woman with child for her good hour. Upon the break of day the first thing I could discover is that, within less than a mile of us, lies a great ridge of white sands, intermixed with rocks, upon which the sea doth break, and a league further off very low land, but the inland high and full of woods. By this time it was apparently known to be the Barbados."

Sir Henry Colt stayed three weeks at this island, and so distressed was he by the hectic idleness of the colonists, that his journal breaks into a personal appeal:

"You are all young men, and of good desert, if you would but bridle the excess of drinking, together with the quarrelsome conditions of your fiery spirits. . . . I, in imitation of this bad example of yours, and for your society, was brought from two drams of hot water<sup>1</sup> a meal to thirty in a few days, if I had continued this acquaintance I do believe I should have been brought to the increase of sixty. But the worst of all is your manifold quarrels. Your young and hot bloods should not have oil added to increase the flame, but rather cold water

<sup>1</sup> hot water: spirits.

to quench it. As your quarrels have slight beginnings, so are they without much difficulty soon ended, but only to the trouble of your governor, who being but a young man I have often wondered by myself alone that he is not corrupted by you, but certainly he naturally inclined to modesty and temperance. For in a few days you corrupted me, that have seen more, and lived many more years to be more wise and temperate. Your servants also you keep idly; they continually pestered our ship without any occasion or acquaintance, lingering sometimes twenty-four hours with us, although no man spoke to them, to avoid labour, which I am persuaded few of you look after. For let us come to your plantations. Behold the order of them; first in ten days' travel about them, I never saw any man at work. Your ground and plantations show what you are, they lie like ruins of some village lately burned—here a great timber tree half burned, in an other place a rafter singed all black. There stands a stub of a tree above two yards high, all the earth covered black with cinders, nothing is clear. What digged or weeded for beauty? All are bushes, and long grass, all things carrying the face of a desolate and disorderly show to the beholder. But you are all beholden to your climate, more than to your soil or industry. For your soil, that is nought, nothing else but loose sand. Your ground which you esteem the best is but the leaves and ashes of your trees. Dig but half a foot deep and there will be found nothing else but clay. Your water is thick and not of the best. Your under woods are not hard to be cleared, your great trees not many; but your rivers few or none, except such as you account out of vain glory rivers, being no other than little pits; or if it holds water but for a small time it is named a river.

"Yet for all this let no man condemn you and yours. You might all be so happy, for you are able if you will to aid and help all others. Now, do but consider what you are owners of. Your air and soil produceth with a marvellous swiftness. What can either the earth or sea afford that the meanest man of you all might not have in abundance? Add but to it your own endeavours. Your wheat is made perfect in three months; trees last year planted bear the year following. You are furnished with fig trees, cotton trees, vines, oranges, lemons, pomegranates, plantains, pines, Indian wheat red and white, the tree cassain for break, peas, beans, guavas, a good fruit, turkeys, peacocks, hens, wild hogs, English hogs, tame pigeons and wild pigeons, English cows whose milk tastes better than in England, the wild prickly apple, a pretty lively taste, the fruit round and green, and the paw-paw that carries a leaf like the fig tree but more jagged."

Many other good things were to be found: rats "that eat in taste like young rabbits"; quantities of land crabs "that lives in holes

like conies, and comes abroad a nights and will catch you by the legs"; the palmito tree "which carries her leaf like a lady's screen fan, or peacocks tail, the fruit like a cabbage but better," and "divers sorts of birds, that sing us music daily to our ship." "Sloth and negligence" concludes Sir Henry, "must only cause this people to want, for to confess truly, all the islands that I have passed by and seen unto this day, not any pleaseth me so well. Would that it were my own and thus seated in any part of Europe, I will not say what I could be in a short time, if the princes of Europe by force and covetousness would not take it from me."

But the princes of Europe were also active in the Indies. As he was sailing towards St. Christopher's, at eleven o'clock in the morning, while the ship's company was at prayers, the sound of gunfire was heard. Two Spanish men-of-war were found to be chasing the ship, followed, at a distance, by a fleet of twenty. The *Alexander* managed to escape the main fleet, but at four in the afternoon it became necessary to fight the two foremost ships. Philosophically calm, Sir Henry prepared for the unequal battle:

"These two ships thus singled out, we resolve to undertake; and without any demonstration of fear every man takes his place. . . And after I had bestowed two bottles of hot water amongst our men, we now turn our head to encounter those, from whom not long before we fled."

Shots were exchanged, the Spaniards doing no more than to cut some rigging, while the English inflicted considerable damage, one of their shots "very happily passing through the body" of the Spanish ship.

"The Spanish Captain at these shots scratcheth his head and his hat falls overboard, which he lost in this rash and bold attempt. What else was done or what shot passed, who can tell? For we are now all covered with smoke. But the first thing I could see is that they have given over the fight and fallen off our stern."

Sir Henry made no attempt to pursue them, partly because he was afraid of attracting the notice of the rest of the fleet, but mainly, as he explains, because "we were unwilling to proceed further into a quarrel against a nation which I did hitherto honour far beyond any other in Europe." Sir Henry as a Roman Catholic had even fought for the King of Spain in the Netherlands, and not unnaturally, he was embarrassed to find Spain his implacable enemy in the New World.

His ship had escaped with little damage, but that little was of the most regrettable kind, as he discovered the next day:

" . . . this day was spent in nailing up cabins, and placing of



trunks ; for all things was put out of order in the clearing our ship for fight. I lost and there was broken many glasses in cases of hot waters. but especially nine great glass bottles broke of the best Canary wine of England, a loss irrecoverable and lamentable in such a season of sadness and misery ; also a barrel of potatoes thrown overboard which we now wished for again."

Altogether the incident had a dispiriting effect on him, which was still felt two days later :

"This morning I was troubled with sad and melancholy dreams of the death of my best friends in England. I pray God nothing be true in them, yet they will not vanish out of my memory."

Sir Henry at once sent warning to the governors of St. Christopher's and Nevis, who hastened to prepare for a second Spanish invasion. Everyone was jumpy, and the governor of Nevis, in his zeal to defend the island, summoned the scattered settlers by firing volleys of shot, which, being taken for Spanish gunfire, caused little short of a panic.

But the Spanish fleet never appeared, and life on the islands gradually returned to normal. When the danger had blown over Sir Henry landed on St. Christopher's, where he intended to start a plantation which would serve as a base for trading expeditions to the mainland :

"Tuesday twenty-sixth of July toward night brings me ashore with all my company. We supped by moonlight upon a chest and lodged in our tent, placing out two sentinels for our guard to watch one hour and then be relieved by two more. I was not used to lodge on land. The squeaking of lizards and other things whose names I know not, made me take small rest, and also the rats comes at first to visit us."

Next morning was begun the painful work of constructing a house, one of the innumerable wooden shacks which were painfully raised by pioneers all over British America. First trees had to be hacked from the virgin forest ; "the first thing we employ is the axe, an instrument that must set all others to work." Unluckily, someone had forgotten to pack a handle for it, and all work was held up while one was made from "a pretty tree hard and tough" and fitted to the blade. "It is worthy of consideration," Sir Henry remarks with commendable good temper, "what a small unthought of want drive us to, where we cannot borrow." Such were the trivial but tormenting accidents that hampered the building of the empire.

Timber, unfortunately, was very hard to procure on St. Christopher's, especially in the "wonderfully discommodious" site which Sir Henry, in his inexperience, had selected for his house. But in spite of this grave disadvantage, he considered St. Christopher's, on the whole, a

better island than Barbados. Rain fell almost daily, whereas Barbados was dry for six months of the year ; moreover St. Christopher's boasted a "wonder,"—a high mountain such as was not to be found on the other island. As for the inhabitants, they seem to have been equally quarrelsome ; indeed being even more bloodthirsty, they were, in his estimation more worthy of respect :

"St. Christophers' shew more valour in their quarrels than the Barbadians do ; for in less time of my being at St. Christopher's than at Barbados we had one man killed in fight, but they not any."

While Sir Henry settled down to winter in these somewhat unpromising surroundings, his ships returned to England to fetch his son, reinforcements of men, and supplies. With a practical common sense sadly lacking in many of the early British colonists, he furnished his son with a detailed list of the equipment he should bring. Unlike the first settlers of Virginia, who went to work dressed in taffeta, Sir Henry realised that the decorative fashions of seventeenth-century gentlemen were hardly suited to pioneering. His son was instructed to bring such sober attire as : "two dozen boot-hose reasonable fine, somewhat coarse best," and "two dozen shoes russet all, black are naught, they mould and grow red." "Pockets in the sleeves of your jerkins," he advises, "they be better than in your hose and less subject to sweat when the sleeves hang down. All leather pockets or doublets are naught ; they are ever moist and will rot." "Farewell," he concludes blithely and unaccountably, "your mother I have already sent two letters ; I will send no more till our ship returns, for I love her not."

While the English colonists in the West Indies fought French, Spaniards, Caribs, nature, and each other, the English slave-traders on the West African coast were engaged in a prolonged struggle with the Dutch. From the end of the sixteenth century the Dutch were the most aggressive of the nations competing for the control of the profitable African trade in negroes and gold. By 1642 they had succeeded in ousting the Portuguese from the Gold Coast where they had been settled for over a hundred and fifty years, and had established themselves at Elmina, the oldest of the Portuguese trading forts, and other places on the coast.

The slave trade was by that time conducted on an organised system which had little resemblance to the rough and ready methods of Sir John Hawkins. Although kidnapping was not unknown, slaves were usually peaceably purchased from their own countrymen, who were always ready to dispose of such unwanted persons as prisoners of war, insolvent debtors, criminals and superfluous children. Negro and European agents profited alike, and the trade was carried on with the aid and consent of the negro governments, a fact which was not forgotten in later times when it became

necessary for the slave traders to defend their business against philanthropic agitation.

The trade had grown up to meet the demands of Spanish and Portuguese colonists, but in 1620 some Dutch merchants sold a cargo of slaves to the English tobacco planters at Jamestown in Virginia, and from that time the demand for slaves in the English colonies steadily increased. In the middle of the century English traders began to build their own forts on the Gold Coast, thus rousing the bitter hostility of the Dutch, who had by this time superseded the Spaniards as England's most serious mercantile rivals. War finally broke out in 1664, when De Ruyter, the Dutch admiral, sailed his fleet to West Africa and destroyed all English forts on the Gold Coast with the exception of Cape Coast castle.

An English sea captain has left an account of these "barbarities," which, although clumsily written, has the peculiar fascination attaching to eye-witness accounts of historical events. Having been taken prisoner by the Dutch, he saw, from a Dutch ship, the attack on the English fort Cormantine, and its humiliating surrender after a desperate defence by John Cablesse and his followers, negroes who lived in the fort under English protection. From this uninspired narrative the figure of John Cablesse emerges in startling and heroic proportions; it is a tantalising portrait, for one would like to know more of this gallant negro, a loyal ally of the English, who had defended the fort on many previous occasions, and would have visited the King of England had he not feared for the safety of the fort in his absence.

*An Account of De Ruyter's Barbarities in Guinea in 1664.*

"And on the 25th of January the Dutch set sail (we being prisoners with them), and thought to have gone to Cape Coast, but (they) went to leeward of it unto Moree where they have a factory, where they took in some soldiers to help them against Cormantine where they provided much for the storming of it. They thought to have gone that night, but the next morning they had 1,000 negroes from the De Mine<sup>1</sup> to their assistance; and the De Ruyter thinking with their help and 700 of his men to have landed, (they) were repulsed by one John Cablesse a negro and his followers, who lay in ambuscade for them," . . .

Two days later another attempt was made :

"On the 27th day being Sunday they made ready to ours before day, where safely arriving on shore . . . they drew up their men in order and marched with 10,000 towards Cormantine. About one of the clock they went down with three ships to batter the castle (and) about an hour after three more came to them, and the De Ruyter lay off with other ships.

<sup>1</sup> Elmina.

The Dutch played about 150 shot, but the castle fired few. Their foot went all in a scattered order, which John Cabesse with his men fought, and made good his retreat unto the castle and fired still on them, and when he saw our English hung out the flag of truce, he cut off one of his men's head, and with his own hanger cut his own throat. . . The English they yielded the castle without any articles at all, but they (the Dutch) gave them quarter, stripping them naked. And that night they put out the Prince of Orange's colours and blew up John Cabesse's house. It appeared that he was more true to the English than any of his mates subject there, having formerly preserved the castle from many dangers, and keeping always a strong guard about them, and intending to have come and seen His Majesty in England, but only for fear of the castle. There was great reward proffered by the Dutch agents to anyone that should bring his (head) to them, but he was buried by the blacks at old Cormantine. On the 30th of January De Ruyter hanged out his Majesty's colours with five of the Royal Companies Colours<sup>1</sup> which they had taken on the coast, and then they brought a gentl. Sylvan on board the De Ruyter, and the rest of the prisoners were dispersed amongst the other ships. The negroes were very troublesome about the plunder of the castle, and killed one (of the) Dutch captains and some of their men. The Dutch got great store of plunder, hanging all the rigging of their ships with those goods they had taken ; they left eighty men with a governor in the castle."

De Ruyter proceeded to the West Indies, but his attack on Barbados was beaten off with heavy losses. None the less, he succeeded in capturing sixteen large English merchant vessels at Nevis at Montserrat, which he took back with him to Europe, skilfully evading the English fleet which was lying in wait for him.

This drastic defeat on the Gold Coast was only a small setback to the English slave trade. Although by the Treaty of Breda the Dutch retained their conquests, the English speedily opened new trading stations, and in 1672 Charles II granted a charter to the Royal African Company, which built a number of new forts, besides repairing Cape Coast. Backed by the English crown and government, English slave traders gradually overcame the rivalry first of the Dutch and later of the French, so that by the beginning of the eighteenth century they had gained a leading position in the trade. In 1713 England acquired the *asiento*—the exclusive right of exporting slaves to the Spanish colonies—a monopoly which had previously been held by the French, and before that by the Dutch. Although the contract only lasted thirty years, the English slave trade boomed all through the eighteenth century, reaching, for the times, enormous proportions : it is estimated that on an average 20,000 slaves

<sup>1</sup> The Royal African Company, founded 1662.



were exported yearly between 1680 and 1786 and in some years the number may have been as high as 50,000.

This hundred years of prosperous activity has produced a varied and entertaining literature ; every aspect of the slave trade is vividly described in the journals of trading agents, sea captains and their crews. Few express any doubts as to the morality of their business ; Captain William Snelgrave, in fact, contends that the slave trade was as much a benefit to the slaves as to their owners.

*Captain William Snelgrave ; a New Account of some parts of Guinea and the Slave Trade. (Pub. 1734.)*

" Several objections have often been raised against the lawfulness of this trade, which I shall not undertake to refute. I shall only observe in general, that tho' the traffic in human creatures, may at first sight appear barbarous, inhuman and unnatural ; yet the traders herein have as much to plead in their own excuse, as can be said for some other branches of trade, namely, the *Advantage* of it : And that not only in regard of the merchants, but also of the slaves themselves, as will plainly appear from these following reasons.

" First, it is evident, that abundance of captives, taken in war, would be inhumanly destroyed, was there not an opportunity of disposing of them to the Europeans. So that at least many lives are saved, and great numbers of useful persons kept in being.

" Secondly, when they are carried to the plantations, they generally live much better there, than they ever did in their own country ; for as the planters pay a great price for them, 'tis their interest to take care of them.

" Thirdly, by this means the English plantations have been so much improved, that 'tis almost incredible, what advantages have accrued to the nation thereby, especially in the sugar islands, which lying in a climate near as hot as the coast of Guinea, the negroes are fitter to cultivate the land there, than white people.

" Then as to the criminals amongst the negroes, they are by this means effectually transported, never to return again, a benefit which we very much want here."

Snelgrave's account of an adventure on the African coast gives every indication that he considered himself a Christian gentleman of high principles and tender feelings. Having entertained the local King, called Acqua, to a music party on his ship, he was invited to attend the court. Accordingly he landed, accompanied by a guard of ten well-armed sailors, for he knew this tribe to be "fierce and brutish cannibals."

The King received them sitting in state on a stool "under some shady trees," surrounded by his courtiers and fifty of his guard "armed with bows and arrows, a sword by their side, and a barbed lance in their hands."

"After having presented the King with some things, which, tho' trifling to us, he seemed highly delighted with; accidentally turning my head about, I saw a little negro-child tied by the leg to a stake driven in the ground; the flies and other vermin crawling on him, and two priests standing by. Being surprised at this sight, I asked the King, 'What was the reason of the child's being tied in that manner?' He replied, 'It was to be sacrificed that night to his God Egbo, for his prosperity.' Moved at the hearing of this, I called (too hastily I must own) to one of my people, to take the child from the ground, in order to preserve him. He had no sooner done it, but one of the King's guard advanced towards him in a threatening posture with his lance; and fearing he would run him through, I immediately took out of my pocket a small pistol; at the sight of which, the King rose from his stool in a fright. But I bid the linguist tell him, 'I would offer no injury to him or his, provided he ordered his guard not to attack mine.' Which he readily doing, and all things being quiet, I expostulated with him, 'for his breaking the laws of hospitality in permitting one of his guard to threaten my man with his lance.' To this the King replied, 'I had not done well in ordering him to seize the child, it being his property.' This I acknowledged, 'excusing it on account of my religion, which, tho' it does not allow of forcibly taking away what belongs to another, yet expressly forbids so horrid a thing, as the putting a poor innocent child to death. And that his would, instead of blessings, certainly bring on him the wrath of the most high God, whom we white men adored.' I also observed to him, 'that the grand law of Human Nature was, to do unto others as we desired to be done unto'; and many other arguments I used, too long to repeat here. At the same time I offered to pay him for the child, which the King readily accepted. And on my asking, what he desired for it? to my surprise he only asked a bunch of sky coloured beads, worth about half a crown sterling. I expected he would have demanded at least ten times that value; for the negroes, from the King to the trader, are generally very ready, on any extraordinary occasion, to make their advantage of us."

Virtue was indeed rewarded, and the incident, which might have made trouble, had only the happiest consequences. The Englishmen sat down to a friendly banquet with their native hosts, Snelgrave being careful, however, to avoid drinking the King's palmito wine for fear of poison, though his men "did not spare it, drinking plentifully of it with his guards, and eating likewise heartily of their victuals."

But they suffered no harm from their imprudence, and as for Snelgrave, he profited from his good deed more than even as a Christian he could have anticipated :

“ As we were returning to our boat, I told the gunner, ‘ that when we came on board, he should pitch on some motherly woman, to take care of this poor child.’ To which he answered, ‘ He had already one in his eye.’

It happened, the day before I went on shore to see the King, I had purchased the mother of the child (tho’ I knew it not then) from one of his people ; and at the time my surgeon observing to me, she had much milk in her breasts, I enquired of the person that brought her on board, whether she had a child when he bought her from the inland trader ? To which he answered in the negative.

But now on my coming on board, no sooner was the child handed into the ship, but this poor woman espying it, ran with great eagerness, and snatched him out of the white man’s arms that held him. I think there never was a more moving sight than on this occasion, between the mother and her little son, . . . especially when the linguist told her, ‘ I had saved her child from being sacrificed.’ Having at that time above three hundred negroes on board my ship, no sooner was the story known amongst them, but they expressed their thankfulness to me, by clapping their hands, and singing a song in my praise. This affair proved of great service to us, for it gave them a good notion of white men so that we had no mutiny in our ship, during the whole voyage.”

The behaviour of cargoes with a less good notion could be disastrous, both to safety and trade. The slaves were by no means lacking in courage, those from Cormantine, the home of the warlike John Cablesse who had defended the fort against de Ruyter, being the most resolute.

“ For I knew several voyages had proved unsuccessful by mutinies ; as they had occasioned either the total loss of the ship and the white man’s lives ; or at least by rendering it absolutely necessary to kill or wound great numbers of the slaves, in order to prevent total destruction. Moreover, I knew many of these Cormantine negroes despised punishment, and even death itself ; it having often happened in Barbados and other islands, that on their being anyways hardly dealt with, to break them of their stubbornness in refusing to work, twenty or more having hanged themselves at a time in a plantation.”

One of the earliest books of anti-slave trade propaganda, a collection of first-hand evidence from men of all nationalities involved in the

trade, describes what was commonly considered as the best way of handling these damaging mutinies.

*A Short account of that part of Africa inhabited by the negroes.*<sup>1</sup>

John Atkins, English surgeon on board Admiral Ogle's squadron, relates that he met a Captain Harding, who told him that during a voyage to America several of his slaves, including one woman, had started a mutiny, and were only caught after they had succeeded in murdering three English sailors with a hammer. Their punishment was nicely calculated: the two leaders of the mutiny, being the strongest, and therefore the most valuable as merchandise, came off lightly with a mild flogging, although it was they who had actually committed the murders, while those who had only given their passive support were tortured to death as an example to the rest of the cargo. Anyone unacquainted with the conditions of the trade, might, explains Atkins, find it hard to understand:

"Why, Captain Harding, weighing the stoutness and worth of the two slaves, did, as in other countries they do rogues of dignity, whip and scarify them only; while three other abettors (but no actors, nor of strength for it) he sentenced to cruel deaths, making them first eat the heart and liver of one of them he killed. The woman he hoisted by the thumbs, and slashed her with knives, before the other slaves, till she died."

The reason for this action was, of course, what Snelgrave would call "the advantage of it."

All Snelgrave's pretty arguments are made fatuous by this frightening book. The native wars, in which he claims that the European traders performed the benevolent rôle of rescuing prisoners from execution, are shown to have been instigated by the traders and their negro agents; William Bosman, the Dutch factor at Elmina, states that a certain commander bribed one negro king with five hundred pounds, and another with eight hundred to make war upon their neighbours. The journal of an English surgeon<sup>2</sup> gives a gruesome picture of the slave-ships flocking like vultures to the scene of war:

"Sestro, December the 29th, 1724. No trade today, tho' many traders came on board, they informed us that the people are gone to war within the land, and will bring prisoners enough in two or three days, in hopes of which we stay.

"The 30th day. No trade yet, but our traders came on board, to-

<sup>1</sup> Published Philadelphia 1762, London 1768.

<sup>2</sup> *A Voyage to the Coast of Guinea for Slaves, etc., in a vessel from Liverpool.* Robert Law, taken verbatim from the original Manuscripts of the *Surgeon's Journal*.



day, and informed us the people had burnt four towns of their enemies ; and indeed we have seen great smoke all the morning, a good way up the country ; so that tomorrow we expect slaves. . . . Another large ship is just come in ; yesterday came in a large Londoner.

"The 31st. Fair weather, but no trade, yet we see each night towns burning, but we hear the Sestro men are many of them killed, by the inland negroes, so that we fear this war will be unsuccessful.

"The 2nd January. Last night we saw a prodigious fire break out about eleven o'clock, and this morning see the town of Sestro burnt down to the ground (it contains some hundred houses) so that we find their enemies are too hard for them at present, and consequently our trade spoiled here ; so that about seven o'clock we weighed anchor, as did likewise the three other vessels, to proceed lower down."

Far from propagating the Grand Law of Human Nature, the white traders even undermined the code of the poor benighted blacks. According to Francis Moore, an English factor, the slave trade had demoralised their rulers and perverted their system of justice :

"Captivating the people is, by custom, become so familiar, that when the King. . . wants to make a present to the factor, for what he has received of him, he sends to have two or three slaves taken up at the nearest village. Unhappy are they, who at that time fall into the hands of his guards, for they stay to make no choice . . . .

"Besides those slaves, there are many bought along the river ; these are either taken in war. . . or men condemned for crimes, or persons stolen, which is very frequently . . . . Since the slave trade has been introduced, all punishments are commuted into this ; and they strain hard for crimes, in order to have the benefit of selling the criminal ; so that not only great crimes, but even trifling ones, are at present punished with slavery."

Yet many observers of the period agree with John Sparke, the Elizabethan recorder of Hawkins' expedition, that West African negroes were by nature far from brutal. William Smith contends that they were a peaceful and industrious people, endowed with pleasing manners and a high level of intelligence :

"It is easy to perceive what happy memories they are blessed with, and how great progress they would make in the sciences, in case their genius was cultivated with study. They explain themselves in choice terms, their expressions noble, and manners polite."

Indeed, it seems possible that had it not been in the financial interest of Europeans to regard the negroes as brutes only fit for slavery, they might have been romanticised into examples of that pure primitive man so dear to eighteenth-century imagination. In the mind of the



The Harbour of Antigua seen from Great George Fort.  
*From an early nineteenth century colour plate. By courtesy of the British Museum.*



"The Voyage of the Sable Venus from Angola to the West Indies."  
*From an engraving The Sable Venus: An Ode, a poem in praise of West  
Indian slave girls included in an enlightened survey of the West Indies  
written in 1791.*



factor Mr. Adamson, for instance, they suggested the loftiest conceptions :

"The simplicity of the natives, their dress and manners, revived in my mind the idea of our first parents ; and I seemed to contemplate the world in its primitive state ; . . . they are, generally speaking, very good natured, social and obliging. I was not a little pleased with this my first reception."

But crammed below the decks of the slave-ships, shackled in pairs to prevent mutiny, suicide or escape, dying from overcrowding and rotting from disease, they made a very different impression on those who transported them. Thomas Phillips relates that out of seven hundred slaves taken on board his ship on the African coast, three hundred and twenty died before reaching Barbados, to the "great regret" of the traders, who resented losing their profit "after enduring much misery and stench so long among a parcel of creatures nastier than swine ; no goldfinder<sup>1</sup> can suffer such noisome drudgery as they do, who carry negroes, having no respite from their afflictions so long as any of their slaves are alive."

Those who survived to disgust their owners had no better prospects on reaching their destination. In Jamaica, which imported more slaves than any other West Indian island, it was estimated that on an average more than half died of fever in the "seasoning" of the first year, and in Barbados, about a quarter. For the remainder the expectation of life was poor. Captain Snelgrave might argue that the "great price" of a slave was a good reason for taking care of him ; but it was commonly reckoned by the planters that if a slave lived eight or nine years his labour was a profitable return on the cost of purchase. Slaves were in fact too cheap and plentiful to justify the expense of good conditions, and the need for discipline, combined with the extravagance of behaviour which seems to have characterised the West Indian settlers at all periods, encouraged unbridled cruelty.

The sadistic brutality of the planters is confirmed by as scientific and disinterested an observer as Sir Hans Sloane,<sup>1</sup> who in 1687, early in his distinguished career, sailed to the Indies as physician to the Duke of Albemarle, the newly appointed "Supreme Commander of Jamaica and other parts of English America."

<sup>1</sup> goldfinder : scavenger.

<sup>1</sup> *Sir Hans Sloane* (1660-1753). In the course of his successful and distinguished career he held the positions of Secretary and President of the Royal Society, President of the College of Physicians, physician general to the army, and first physician to George II. In 1716 he was created a baronet, the first physician to receive an hereditary title. He is best remembered by his gift to the Apothecaries' Company of the physic garden in Chelsea, which they had formerly rented. On his death he gave to the nation for the nominal sum of £20,000 his famous collection of curiosities, including those purchased from William Courteen, another great collector. This collection formed the nucleus of the British Museum, which was opened in 1759.



*A Voyage to the islands of Madeira, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christopher's and Jamaica with the Natural History of the Herbs, Trees, four-footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, etc., of the Last of those Islands ; to which is prefixed an Introduction wherein is an account of the Inhabitants, Air, Waters, Diseases, Trade, etc., of that Place, with some Relations concerning the Neighbouring Continent, and the Islands of America, illustrated with the Figures of the things described, which have not been heretofore engraved, in large copper-plates as big as life. By Hans Sloane, M.D., Fellow of the College of Physicians and Secretary of the Royal Society. 1709.*

This zealous young man, who was later to become a leading surgeon, a famous collector, and Secretary and then President of the Royal Society, valued his post with the Duke and Duchess principally on account of the unique opportunities it afforded him for acquiring scientific information. The passion for natural history shared by most travellers of the seventeenth century, in Hans Sloane took a professional, comprehensive and monumental form. During this expedition, which from an official point of view was a failure, which in fact killed the Duke and rendered the Duchess insane, Sloane discovered eight hundred new species of plants ; the collection of dried plants, animals and birds which he brought home with him formed part of the nucleus of the British Museum, and his information was published in a huge, beautifully illustrated folio work which more than fulfils its title.

Not only descriptions of his botanical discoveries, but observations of every conceivable phenomenon are included ; on the voyage out Sloane studied sea-sickness and green bile, the inside of a shark's head, flying fish, porpoises, grampuses, dolphins, the jelly fish or " sea nettle," and phosphorescent water, with reference to authorities as various as Drake, Ovid, Peter Mundy, Giovanni Battista, Pliny, St. Jerome and Sir John Mandeville. In the Indies he ascertained the minerals of Barbados—the Duke having been granted a patent for all the minerals in the English islands this was a matter of pressing interest—the methods of cultivating sugar and tobacco, recipes for making cane-drink, perino, rum, and plantain-drink, negro dances—transcribing the words and music of their songs—and even a somewhat Heath Robinson device for catching alligators :

" When I was in Jamaica, there was one of these used to do such abundance of mischief to the people's cattle in the neighbourhood of the bay, having his regular courses to look for prey. One of the inhabitants there, as I was told, tied a long cord to his bedstead, and on the other end of the cord fastened a piece of wood and a dog, so that the alligator swallowing the dog and piece of wood, the latter came across his throat, as it was designed, and after pulling the bedstead to the

window, and awakening the person in bed, he was caught. . . . This alligator was nineteen feet long."

Such miscellaneous information he found time to note, besides collecting his specimens, and treating his patients, planters and slaves, for innumerable ailments, many of which seem to have been caused by such unrestrained habits as were deplored by Sir Henry Colt: apoplectic distempers, hypochondriac melancholy, intermitting fevers, vertigo, convulsions, oppressions of the stomach, "incoherent fancies at night-fall," and dropsy "caused by intemperance in wine and venery."

With equal conscientiousness, and a callousness typical of his period, he observed and recorded the punishments for slaves:

"The punishments for crimes of slaves, are usually for rebellions burning them, by nailing them down on the ground with crooked sticks on every limb, and then gradually applying the fire by degrees from the feet and hands, burning them up gradually to the head, whereby their pains are extravagant. For crimes of a lesser nature gelding, or chopping off half the foot with an axe. These punishments are suffered by them with great constancy.

"For running away they put iron rings of great weight on their ankles, or pottocks about their necks, which are iron rings with two long necks rivetted to them, or a spur in the mouth.

"For negligence, they are usually whipped by the overseers with lance-wood switches, till they be bloody, and several of the switches broken, being first tied up by their hands in the mill-houses. Beating with manati straps is thought too cruel, and therefore prohibited by the customs of the country. The cicatrices are visible on their skins for ever after, and a slave, the more he have of those, is the less valued.

"After they are whipped till they are raw, some put on their skins pepper and salt to make them smart; at other times their masters will drop melted wax on their skins, and use several very exquisite torments. These punishments are sometimes merited by the blacks, who are a very perverse generation of people, and though they appear harsh, yet are scarce equal to some of their crimes, and inferior to what punishments other European nations inflict on their slaves in the East Indies, as may be seen by Moquet, and other travellers."

The slaves, it seems, were not the only victims of the slave trade. The big profits went to a few men at the top of this great organisation, and a small independent trader could barely scrape enough together to retire on after a lifetime's toil in the deadly climate of West Africa. The journal of the slave trader Nicholas Owen, who struggled, failed and died in Sierra Leone, makes the impression of a tragic autobiography.

*A View of Some Remarkable Accidents in the Life of Nics. Owen on the Coast of Africa from the Year 1746 to the Year 1757.*

Nicholas Owen felt that he had been persecuted all his life. He had been born in good circumstances, but a spendthrift father, "by living in grandeur above his fortune and with the help of a particular law suit," had ruined the family. Prosperous but heartless relatives had done nothing to help the destitute children, and Nicholas Owen had soon determined "with the utmost application to live independent of these wretches."

To this end he became a sailor on slave-trading vessels. Although, disappointingly to the modern reader, he never mentions the slaves, he is eloquent in describing his own experiences, which were such as to rob him of any illusions about the seafaring life :

"I think in my opinion that a sailor that has no other means to satisfy the necessities of this life than sailing the seas for wages, I look upon him to be more miserable than a poor farmer who lives upon his labour, who can rest at night upon a bed of straw in obscurity, than a sailor who comforts himself in the main top by blowing of his fingers in a frosty night."

His adventures on his various voyages between England, West Africa, the West Indies and America were certainly discouraging. Nicholas Owen seems to have been of the type that attracts misfortune. On his first voyage, which was only between England and Ireland, he had time to observe "a small sketch of the miserable dependence a sailor has for his living," and subsequent voyages were blighted by a fourteen weeks' "long and tedious" passage between Dublin and Philadelphia, engagements with French privateers, and a mutiny off the coast of Sierra Leone, as a result of which he found himself stranded with his brother starving on a desert shore, where the sight of an alligator and "the tracks of tigers and other beasts upon the sand, very large," added to their alarm.

They survived, however, to take part in two more voyages, the second of which ended in complete disaster. They had sailed from New England in a ship carrying a cargo of American goods, rum, sugar, tobacco, chocolate, snuff, to trade in West Africa for slaves. All their savings were involved in this venture, which, they hoped, would enable them to rise from the position of sailors to that of slave dealers, for they owned part of the cargo, and were to be allowed to purchase slaves on their own account. Arriving off Sierra Leone, they landed at the Bananas Island with the captain and a few others. Here they were immediately seized by the natives, put in irons, and stripped of all their clothes. This, they learned was a reprisal for the action of a certain Dutch captain, who had recently

kidnapped some of the free people of the tribe. The natives then captured and pillaged the ship, and "drank and ate until they were easy." The Owen brothers thereby lost not only their share in the American cargo, but four years' pay in gold. Luckily they were rescued not long afterwards :

"We were detained in irons four or five days, when they let us have our liberty to walk up and down the island for our recreation. In this manner we remained until a certain gentleman named Mr. Hall carried us off the island in his shallop, he being at the same time bound for the Cape de Verde islands. . . . This gentleman was one who has, like a great many others, spent his estate at home, therefore obliged to go abroad in search of a new one, one of those who goes by the general name of a good fellow, that despises all who shrinks his shoulders at that generous spirit of liberality, one who said in his heart 'let tomorrow provide for itself,' and to conclude he had many principles of honour, yet mixed with some strains that made his character dubious."

This plausible adventurer had managed to weather experiences even more fearful than those of the Owen brothers. According to his own story, which Nicholas Owen inserts in his journal, he had been cast away with some companions on a desert island where they had existed nearly half a year before being captured by the natives. Separated from his companions, he had then lived with negroes for three years, learning their language, and earning their respect by his skill in medicine, until he became the King's favourite, and was given one of the royal princesses as a bride. He had been supported all this time by a daily donation of food, which he collected riding round the country on a white cow—also a present from the King—and when he was eventually rescued by a European trader the tribe had implored him not to leave.

Nicholas Owen and his brother had no choice but to place themselves in the hands of their resourceful rescuer, and it was as his agents that they began their career as resident traders. Nicholas first settled on Sherboro island off the coast of Sierra Leone, the island of Sambula where Hawkins had carried out successful raids nearly two hundred years before, capturing the natives and burning and pillaging their towns. But for Owen, the acquisition of slaves was a much less simple and profitable business :

"We are now to return to our history of Sherboro where I am now an inhabitant. Our chiefest business is in the purchasing of slaves, which is very troublesome. In the first place you are obliged to treat them all to liquor before you purchase anything or not ; at the same time you are liable to their noise and bad language without any satisfaction. You are obliged to take all advantage and leave all bound of justice when trading with these creatures as they do by you, . . . .



Some people may think a scruple of conscience in the above trade, but it's very seldom minded by our European merchants."

Nicholas Owen may have been untroubled by his conscience, but he never reconciled himself to life as a West African trader. Although he seems to have had sufficient curiosity to study the people and customs of the country, all his observations are recorded with the same melancholy distaste :

" These people that goes by the names of kings and princes are only so in title. Their substance consists of nothing more than a lace hat, a gown and a silver headed cane and a mat to sit down upon, which serves to distinguish them from the rest of the negroes."

Sometimes he amused himself by making sketches of them :

" As I have nothing extraordinary this day I have drawn the King of Sherboro in his full majesty with his gilt brass crown, sitting in state over his delight, two pots of palm wine ; he has likewise four of his great lords at his feet as usual, with his trumpeter behind his chair and holding a bottle of brandy as if afraid to set it down while he performs his office, for fear of an invasion from some other quarter while he blows his blast out."

Writing and illustrating his journal was one of his few diversions, and the entries reflect the disheartening progress of his life : a visit to his brother up the river who was labouring under a " phlegmatic melancholy disposition of mind " ; the killing of a very large spider in the cook-room, " all covered with long hair and very dreadful to look at ; " an earthquake on the volcanic island of Fogo, as a result of which " the fire is totally extinguished and considerable damage done to the inhabitants, having the peak or volcano whole carried away " ; and the disastrous decline of trade due to the Seven Years' War—" it's terrible to consider our situation," he cries despairingly. But his acquaintances seem to have been even more unlucky : there was a Captain C. P. whose ship and slaves were seized by his treacherous friend Captain P. B., so that the poor man was reduced to " trading here among us in a long boat, reflecting on that unnatural villain who sacrificed his honour, friendship and all for the sake of ill got riches " ; there was an " industrious pious good man " who had sailed as mate under Captain Anson, but had somehow lost his savings and was " very glad to find himself on board a sloop " with Owen " in the quality of a common sailor " until he died of a fever ; while another gentleman died at the very moment when, after thirteen years in the country, he had amassed a sufficient fortune for his return to Europe—" a man that was addicted to great misfortune but bore up in all his afflictions with a remarkable patience."

Nicholas Owen and his brother finally settled on the mainland near the mouth of the Sherboro river. Here they built a house, and for a time sank into a lugubrious kind of contentment. A garden, although besieged by vermin, brought them homely satisfactions, and when they could ignore the wrangling of native traders and the violence of the tropical landscape they managed to comfort themselves with faint reminiscences of English rural peace.

"Now indeed I have some respite from business and the hurry of the world. . . . As I am much inclined to be melancholy, this place so far suits with my inclinations that if it were not for certain domestic troubles I should think myself happy even in this miserable country, without ever thinking of Europe and its pleasures. From my window I can see all the adjacent country with part of the River Sherboro and the King's town to the east, again to the west the sea lies open to your view, with the dreadful waves that rolls over the bar and shoals in the mouth of the river, which occasions a murmuring noise even at the house where we live. As this month is the time for planting all kinds of vegetables, I employ some of my time in sowing and planting watermelons, pompions, guinea peas, and other things that's necessary for our household use. This is my morning's work and as the sun rises I employ the people in hedging my several little gardens in, to keep out the crabs, snakes, or other vermin. This is the chief employment of my more retired hours, when I think myself happy. By and by comes a great troop of canoes full of negroes with their several commodities to sell, one fetches camwood, another fowls, a third a bunch of plantains or some rice, one complaining I gave him no dram, another says as much for tobacco and a third is hungry, another brings his part for service<sup>1</sup> (as they term it) for which I am obliged to return more than it's worth at his departure, otherwise there's a palaver. Now, I say, begins my troubles and a frustration of these few minutes I passed before in an agreeable quiet, comforting myself that God will in his due time bring me among Christians and my native people, where I may perhaps enjoy the pleasures that I am so long absent from and with joy call to mind the many changes of fortune that Providence has safely conveyed me through."

Yet all the miseries of Africa were preferable to the shame of returning to these fellow Christians and countrymen without an imposing fortune.

"A man that has spent his prime abroad, notwithstanding all his misfortunes, as shipwrecks, plundering, and a hundred other things that occurs in the life of a sailor, I say that these things will not keep him from the character of a prodigal son, who has spent his time idly abroad. And now he comes home a useless burden to his friends

<sup>1</sup> For service is when they come to see you with some small present to make them welcome. (Owen's footnote.)

the first thing that you hear is your name spread all over the town as the greatest liar in the world, so that all you have to do is to hold your tongue and be contented with the common name of 'the mulatto just come from Guinea.' Otherwise if your pockets is well stuffed with gold, that very particular hides all other infirmities, then you have heaps of friends of all kinds thronging and waiting for your commands. Then you're known by the name of 'the African' at every great man's house, and your discourse is set down as particular as Christopher Columbus's expedition in America."

Nicholas Owen never succeeded in stuffing his pockets with gold, never returned to be lionised in the drawing-rooms of London. Time dragged on, and success always eluded him; the latter part of his journal abounds in melancholy reflections of fortune, fate, his "lot" and the "Divine Disposer," punctuated by the unenthusiastic mention of such meagre distractions as a present of a chameleon from King Sumana, a trial of Maningo witchcraft, the arrival of King Furry Do, a great conqueror from the interior, and "shellwork," a craft which he had learnt from the captain of a passing vessel:

"I have just finished my shellwork and I think it's just suitable to my dwelling. It's of round form with a looking glass in the middle; I have wrought it into divers figures with various kinds of shell and moss taken from the bark of old trees and shrubs, which I have laid on with turpentine and bees wax well boiled together into a hard substance."

Disappointment, thwarted ambition, and frequent attacks of fever gradually wore him down. In April, 1758, only three years after he had taken up residence in West Africa, he writes:

"I begin to be quite tired of this country and would run a great risk to get any way clear of it, but there are so many impediments in my way that I am afraid my bones must lie here before I can find a way home. Oh how I long for the produce of Europe, such as milk, salt, and a hundred other things that's good for a sick man, which I can't get here. Here I am bound up from all good conversation and even the necessaries of life. I have no satisfaction in my life and no signs of mending it for a better now, as the war holds out on both sides. I never found myself so low in spirits since I came to Africa as this present time; whether it's sickness or any distemper of body occasioned by my late illness, I know not."

He never picked up again. In November he reflects:

"In this manner we spend the prime of youth among negroes, scraping the world for money, the universal god of mankind, until death overtakes us."

This entry was prophetic; in March the following year his brother concluded the journal:

"This fatal month makes the final period of the author's life, who died the twenty-sixth of this month, who left me to struggle with the world a little longer, disconsolate and alone amidst negroes."

Whoever suffered from the slave trade, the planters in the West Indies gained enormous advantages. The cultivation of sugar by slave labour proved so profitable that in the course of a century the rude settlements visited by Sir Henry Colt were transformed into some of the richest properties in the world. Janet Schaw saw the West Indies at the height of their prosperity, just before the American War of Independence, when the big plantation owners enjoyed a luxury fit for oriental princes, and a life of gaiety and sophistication strangely unlike the stodgy routine which has been the rule in most other British colonies.

*Janet Schaw*<sup>1</sup>; *Journal of a Lady of Quality, Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina and Portugal in the Years 1774-1776.*

Janet Schaw, who, with Lady Anne Miller and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, is among the outstanding lady tourists of the eighteenth century, travelled with her brother to the West Indies and North Carolina—where her stay was cut short by the outbreak of the American War of Independence—to visit friends and relatives. Little is known of her save that she was distantly connected with Sir Walter Scott, but, like most travel writers of her period, she is unashamedly personal, and it is easy, from her confiding journal, to form a portrait of this high-handed, high-spirited woman of the world, witty, well educated and prejudiced, who endured the discomforts of the voyage from Scotland with unimpaired appetite and good-humour, who tried to save a negro slave on board the ship—"poor Ovid"—from being kept in chains, referred to the pitiful Highland emigrants as "a cargo of Dean Swift's Yahoos newly caught," or "heart affecting figures" according to mood, who was horrified by the "disgusting equality" of America, and went through a terrible storm during which the masts had to be cut away reading Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism*.

Her journey first took her to St. John's, on the island of Antigua, where she was delighted by the flourishing beauty of the scenery, al-

<sup>1</sup> Nothing is known of Janet Schaw, beyond what is told in her *Journal*, save that she was born in Lauriston, a suburb of Edinburgh, came of a good Scots family, and was a third cousin once removed of Sir Walter Scott. She is thought to have been thirty-five or forty at the time of her voyage to the West Indies.



though judging according to the pictorial convention of the eighteenth century, which demanded that a landscape should form a "prospect," embellished with foreground figures and "fine" architecture.

" . . . when we got into the bay, which runs many miles up the island, it is out of my powers to paint the beauty and novelty of the scene. We had the island on both sides of us, yet its beauties were different, the one was hills, dales, and groves, and not a tree, plant or shrub I had ever seen before; the ground is vastly uneven, but not very high; the sugar canes cover the hills almost to the top, and bear a resemblance in colour at least to a rich field of green wheat, the hills are skirted by the palmetto or cabbage tree, which even from this distance makes a noble appearance. The houses are generally placed in the valleys between the hills, and all front to the sea. We saw many fine ones. There are also some fine walks along the shore shaded by different trees, of which I am yet ignorant! . . . . .

"The other side exhibits quite a different scene, as the ground is almost level, a long tongue of land runs into the sea, covered with rich pasture, on which a number of cattle feed. At the farther end of this peninsula is a fort which receives the compliments of the ships and has a fee from them. After we passed this point, we saw some very rich plantations, all enclosed by hedges, but of what kind I know not. The next object that engaged our attention, was a high rock, on the sides of which grew a vast number of oranges and lemons. At the top is a large building, which, our pilot tells us, is the Old Barracks. . . . We saw a number of the officers walking among the orange-trees and myrtles, and I own I thought the prospect was mended by their appearance.

"We have cast anchor at about a mile or a little more from the town of St. John's, which we have in full view. It lies up a hill, and is certainly a fine town, but the houses are low, and have no chimneys, so that at this distance, it does not make a grand appearance; though I dare say it will mend, when we come nearer to it."

In Antigua, and St. Christopher's where she stayed afterwards, Miss Schaw had a delightful holiday-resort existence, visiting friends, sight-seeing in carriages, riding, dancing, flirting, shocking local society by drinking madeira—which was reserved for the gentlemen—at dinner, and eating colossal meals in magnificent interiors. Colonel Martin, a great landowner in Antigua, entertained her to a typical West-Indian banquet.

"We found Mr. Martin at the church door with our carriages, into which we mounted, and were soon at Mr. Halliday's plantation, where he this day dined out; for he has no less than five, all of which have

houses on them. This house is extremely pleasant, and so cool that one might forget they were under the tropic. We had a family dinner, which in England might figure away in a newspaper, had it been given by a Lord Mayor, or the first Duke in the kingdom. Why should we blame these people for their luxury? Since nature holds out her lap, filled with everything that is in her power to bestow, it were sinful in them not to be luxurious. I have now seen turtle almost every day, and though I never could eat it at home, am vastly fond of it here, where it is indeed a very different thing. You get nothing but old ones there, the chickens being unable to stand the voyage; even these are starved, or at best fed on coarse and improper food. Here they are young, tender, fresh from the water, where they feed as delicately, and are as great epicures, as those who feed on them. . . . Could an alderman of true taste conceive the difference between it here and in the city, he would make the voyage on purpose, and I fancy he would make a voyage into the other world before he left the table."

The planters habitually ate thirteen different varieties of fish, all of which, according to Janet Schaw, were excellent, and were usually dressed with "rich sauces" and red pepper, of which they were particularly fond. They had also guinea fowl, turkey, pigeons, mutton, and "fricassées of different kinds intermixed with the finest vegetables in the world, as also pickles of everything the island produces." Their sweets—pastry, puddings, jellies, preserved fruits—were delicious; their pastry, in particular, was "remarkably fine," making admirable fruit tarts, the best of all being a tart of sorrel "which when baked becomes a beautiful scarlet, and the syrup round it quite transparent." As in England, there were many dishes made from milk—"they have sillabubs, floating islands, etc., as frequently as with you." "They wash and change napkins between courses," Miss Schaw notes approvingly. As for the dessert, it was hardly to be imagined. "The dessert now comes under our observation, which is indeed something beyond you. At Mr. Halliday's we had thirty-two different fruits, which though we had many other things, certainly was the grand part."

In the intervals between these daily feasts, choice refreshments were served:

"They have a most agreeable forenoon drink, . . . which is made from the water of the cocoa-nut, fresh lime juice and syrup from the boiler, which tho' sweet has still the flavour of the cane. This the men mix with a small proportion of rum; the ladies never do. This is presented in a crystal cup, with a cover which some have of silver. Along with this is brought baskets of fruits, and you may eat as much as you please of it, because (according to their maxim) fruit can never hurt."

Water was scarce, but the planters had organised the available supply in accordance with their standards of luxury.

"The cisterns in which the water for family use is kept are extremely well calculated to preserve it cool and fresh a great while, and what they use for drinking and table passes through a filtering stone into a lead or marble reservoir, by which means it becomes more lucid and pure than any water I ever saw. This is placed in some shaded corner, and is generally so cold, that it makes one's teeth chatter. It is presented to you in a cocoa-nut shell ornamented with silver, at the end of a hickory handle. This is lest the breath of the servant who presents it should contaminate its purity.

"At the end of the town of St. John's, there is a noble bathing house close to the sea, where the water is strained through many calendars or sieves to prevent the smallest particle of sand from entering the baths, the bottoms of which are polished marble, and everything done that can render it most deliciously cool. It consists of many large apartments, where you can bathe in what manner you please. These each have a dressing-room with every convenience, and seem the contrivance of luxury itself. It is shaded from the land side with palmetto and cocoa-nut trees, under whose umbrage grow a number of European plants."

The men and women who grew up in these opulent surroundings were very different from the bloodthirsty drunken struggling settlers who shocked Sir Henry Colt. They were also different from their British contemporaries; Janet Schaw obviously regarded them as a foreign race. Like the early colonists, they exhibited an un-British extravagance; but the influence of civilisation seems to have refined this extravagance into a voluptuous and debonair disposition such as is usually associated with the Latin races. To Janet Schaw, as to most travelling ladies before and since, this type of behaviour was highly gratifying:

"I think the men are the most agreeable creatures I ever met with, frank, open, generous, and I dare say brave; even in advanced life they retain the vivacity and spirit of youth; they are in general handsome, and all of them have that sort of air, that will ever attend a man of fashion. Their address is at once soft and manly; they have a kind of gallantry in their manner, which exceeds mere politeness, and in some countries, we know, would easily be mistaken for something more interesting than civility, yet you must not suppose this the politeness of French manners, merely words of course. No, what they say, they really mean; their whole intention is to make you happy, and this they endeavour to do without any other view or motive than what they are prompted to by the natural goodness of their own natures. In short, my friend, the woman that *brings a heart* here will have little sensibility if she carry it away. . . . As to the women, they are in general the most amiable creatures in the

world. . . . A fine house, an elegant table, handsome carriage, and a crowd of mulatto servants are what they seem very fond of. . . . While the men are gay, luxurious, and amorous, the women are modest, genteel, reserved and temperate. . . . Their features are in general high and very regular, they have charming eyes, fine teeth, and the greatest quantity of hair I ever saw, which they dress with taste, and wear a great deal of powder. In short, they want only colour to be termed beautiful, but the sun who bestows such rich taints on every other flower, gives none to his lovely daughters, the tincture of whose skin is as pure as the lily, and as pale. . . . The people of fashion dress as light as possible; worked and plain muslins, painted gauzes or light lustrings and tiffities are the universal wear. They have the fashions every six weeks from London, and London itself cannot boast of more elegant shops than you meet with at St. John's."

At Christmas, which Miss Schaw spent in Antigua, even the slaves became attractive :

" We met the negroes in joyful troops on the way to town with their merchandise. It was one of the most beautiful sights I ever saw. They were universally clad in white muslin : the men in loose drawers and waistcoats, the women in jackets and petticoats ; the men wore black caps, the women had handkerchiefs of gauze or silk, which they wore in the fashion of turbans. Both men and women carried neat white wicker-baskets on their heads, which they balanced as our milk-maids do their pails. These contained the various articles for market ; in one a little kid raised its head from amongst flowers of every hue, which were thrown over it to guard it from the heat ; here a lamb, there a turkey or a pig, all covered up in the same elegant manner. While others had their baskets filled with fruit, pine apples reared over each other ; grapes dangling over the loaded basket ; oranges, shaddocks, water melons, pomegranates, granadillas, with twenty others, whose names I forget. They marched in a sort of regular order, and gave the agreeable idea of a set of devotees going to sacrifice to their Indian gods, while the sacrifice offered just now to the Christian God is, at this season of all others the most proper, and I may say boldly, the most agreeable, for it is the mercy of the God of Mercy. At this season the crack of the inhuman whip must not be heard, and for some days, it is an universal jubilee ; nothing but joy and pleasantry to be seen and heard, while every negro infant can tell you that he owes this happiness to the good Buccara God, that he be no hard master, but loves a good black man as well as a Buccara man, and that master will die bad death, if he hurt poor negro in his good day. It is necessary however to keep a look out during this season of unbounded freedom ; and every man on the island is in arms and patrols go all round the different plantations as



well as keep guard in the town. They are an excellent disciplined militia and make a very military appearance. My dear old Coll.<sup>1</sup> was their commander upwards forty years."

But during the rest of the year the white master was less scrupulous. In the plantations of Mount Misery, the mountain on St. Christopher's which seemed to Sir Henry Colt so striking a "wonder," she saw the slaves at work. Having been shown over the sugar mills—"one of the prettiest branches of the English trade"—she was eager to see how sugar was grown, to which end she walked up the mountain, starting before sunrise and pausing for a picnic breakfast on the way—"a truly British frolic"—she sensibly remarks, "and what no Creole would ever dream of." But then Miss Schaw, in common with most British women travellers, had amazing stamina. Like Lady Anne Miller, or Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, nothing ever disconcerted her; after her grinding early morning ascent, she could watch the negroes being flogged to work with urbane equanimity:

"The negroes who are still in troops are sorted so as to match each other in size and strength. Every ten negroes have a driver, who walks behind them, holding in his hand a short whip and a long one. You will too easily guess the use of these weapons; a circumstance of all other the most horrid. They are naked, male and female, down to the girdle, and you constantly observe where the application has been made. But however dreadful this must appear to the humane European, I will do the Creoles the justice to say, they would be averse to it as we are, could it be avoided, which has often been tried to no purpose. When one comes to be better acquainted with the nature of the negroes, the horror of it must wear off. It is the suffering of the human mind that constitutes the greatest misery of punishment, but with them it is merely corporeal. As to the brutes it inflicts no wound on their mind, whose natures seem made to bear it, and whose sufferings are not attended with shame or pain beyond the present moment. When they are regularly ranged, each has a little basket, which he carries up the hill filled with manure and returns with a load of canes to the mill. They go up at a trot, and return at a gallop, and did you not know the cruel necessity of this alertness, you would believe them the merriest people in the world."

In St. Christopher's the planters lived as luxuriously as in Antigua. Janet Schaw's description of her first sight of the Olovaze, the home of her friend Lady Bell Hamilton, suggests a painting of the period, a sumptuous eighteenth-century conversation piece.

"With what inexpressible pleasure do I again view the unaltered

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Martin.

features of my lovely friend. Though the lily has far got the better of the rose, she is as beautiful as ever, nor can her mind be changed from time. . . . When I first entered the great hall at the Olovaze, I was charmed by her appearance, . . . She had standing by her a little mulatto girl not above five years old, whom she retains as a pet. This brown beauty was dressed out like an infant sultana, and is a fine contrast to the delicate complexion of her lady. The hall and everything in it is superbly fine ; the room lofty, and ornamented to a high degree. It is between fifty and sixty feet long, has eight windows and three doors all glazed ; it is finished in mahogany very well wrought, and the panels finished with mirrors."

Staying with Lady Bell and her husband—"one of the most estimable of his sex"—Miss Schaw gained a most favourable impression of the island : "The elegance in which they live," she writes, "is not to be described, and whatever I have said of the table of Antigua is to be found here, even in superior taste."

There was dancing every night—at one moment Miss Schaw had no less than twenty invitations, the people in the town were "extremely polite and hospitable," the stores were "full of European commodities," the churches were "handsome," and she heard an excellent sermon from a Scots clergyman ; the soil seemed to her the richest in the world, and "everything most beautiful in Nature" grew "mixed in delightful confusion." Nothing displeased her except the presence of the French, France having at that period succeeded Spain and Holland as England's chief enemy and rival. There had been a French settlement on the island ever since it had first been colonised, but by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 the territory had been ceded to Britain. Some of the French population, however, had remained, or, in the words of Janet Schaw, the island was still "infested by those gentry." Monkey Hill, she deduces, must have been named after them, for the French laughed, chattered and made grimaces like monkeys ; their "frolics" were as "mischievous," and their "thefts" as "dexterous." No method of getting the better of them had yet been discovered ; "I should think," she concludes, "strong English dogs the best ; as your English is your only animal to humble your French monkey and settle his frolics."

At last it was time to leave. With many tearful farewells, laden with presents, mainly of food, she embarked on a ship sailing for America. After a call at the Dutch island of Eustatia, the voyage was uneventful to the point of boredom, until someone caught sight of "somewhat floating on the water." "All glasses were presently out, and . . . various conjectures formed. In a moment it was a wreck, it was a whale, it was an island ! For my part," observes Janet Schaw, "I liked the wreck best as it was likely to afford most entertainment." But it turned

out to be merely "a tree of immense size, blown off the American coast."

England, the nation that did most to increase the slave trade, was also the nation that did most to destroy it. From the beginning of the eighteenth century Quakers in England and America had voiced their disapproval; in 1787 the growing weight of public opinion in England was expressed in a committee pledged to the abolition of slavery which included Thomas Clarkson, William Wilberforce, and Granville Sharpe. It was the devoted and persistent efforts of this group of men which produced the movement that finally achieved the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the European colonies. This was not accomplished without a long struggle; the first Act of Parliament aimed against the trade was passed in 1806, in 1807 the export and import of slaves within the British dominions was made illegal, but it was not until 1838 that the slaves in the British West Indies finally obtained their freedom.

Before this, however, various philanthropic experiments were made on behalf of the slaves. In 1786 Dr. Henry Smeatham, a resident on the West African coast, conceived the wildly optimistic scheme of forming a colony in Sierra Leone for negroes discharged from the forces after the American War of Independence, and a number of runaway slaves who were at that period sheltering in England. The settlement was begun the following year with four hundred negroes and sixty Europeans, the Europeans being mostly "women of abandoned character." Although land was purchased from a native chief which provided one of the best harbours in West Africa, the colony, not surprisingly, failed.

But the survivors were soon reassembled for another attempt. In 1791, when the first bill against the slave trade was defeated in the House of Commons, a palliative was sanctioned in the shape of the Sierra Leone Company, an organisation with the somewhat vague aims of promoting civilisation and discouraging the slave trade in Sierra Leone. One of the first acts of the company was to inaugurate a second colony made up from the survivors from the first. A new site was chosen, named Granville's Town, and eleven hundred ex-slaves were imported from Nova Scotia to increase the population. Later the colony was transferred back to the site of the first, and named Freetown. Although it was plundered by the French in 1794, who were then competing for the control of the West African coast, it somehow survived this and many other troubles, including several revolts from the liberated slaves themselves, so that by 1807 the colony contained over eighteen hundred inhabitants. The export of slaves having been made illegal that year,

the colony was thenceforth rapidly increased by slaves rescued from captured vessels that had attempted to defy the law.

James Edward Alexander, who called at Freetown in 1834 on his way to South Africa, paints a dismal picture of this garrisoned garden city doling out a stringent form of liberty to the helpless ex-slaves. The colony then numbered over thirty thousand inhabitants, and more were constantly being dumped from captured vessels. Although the United States, Denmark, France, Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands had by that time officially renounced the trade, the law was brazenly flouted by a new type of smuggler-trader even tougher than the eighteenth-century merchants. Indeed, the efforts to bring about abolition actually had the effect of stimulating the slave trade, for as long as slaves were still allowed in America and the European colonies, the prices they fetched were high enough to justify the great risks involved in supplying them. A fleet of British cruisers patrolled the West African coast with the right of searching vessels of any nation, penalties were severe, including transportation, and, during a certain time, death; but the contraband trade continued to flourish, a reckless, ruthless racket which would have horrified such worthy eighteenth-century merchants as Captain Snelgrave. Slaves were much worse treated than when the trade was legal, for greater numbers were crammed into any ship that dared to make the voyage, and if capture seemed imminent, they were hurriedly thrown overboard and drowned. It was said that at least three times as many slaves left Africa as before, and that of these, two-thirds died at sea.

*James Edward Alexander, K.L.S. ; Narrative of a Voyage of Observation among the Colonies of Western Africa in the Flag-Ship Thalia and of a Campaign in Kaffir Land on the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief, in 1835.*

Alexander, who was going to South Africa to carry out exploring expeditions for the Royal Geographical Society, travelled under the auspices of the British government in the flagship of Rear-Admiral Campbell, C.B., naval commander-in-chief of the African station. During the voyage he took part in the chase of several slave-ships, gained first-hand evidence of the methods of the traders, and heard of even worse horrors from an English sailor whom he found stranded on Prince's Island, a Portuguese possession in the Bight of Biafra.

On arriving at Freetown, he eagerly went to investigate the "slave yards":

"We entered the mouth of the Mitomba river, fifteen miles broad: with the low wooded land of the Bullom country on our left; and on our right the picturesque peninsula of Sierra Leone, . . . The shape



of the land, high and covered in parts with forests, reminded me of a West India island. Bright green verdure lined the beach, out of which rose palms, monkey-bread, and majestic cotton trees. The land was indented by bays, . . . On a green hill detached from the main ridge, and about two or three hundred feet above the beach, were the long line of barracks, hospital, etc., and below them was Fort Thornton, a parallelogram, with loop-holed flanking defences, two bastions, and a curtain in front, on which last was the saluting battery and flag-staff. Freetown, consisting of straight streets, and thatched houses apart mingled with gardens, rose in a semi-circular form on a gentle ascent; at the bottom of which were high wooden and slate-covered government stores. A few captured slaving schooners, and H.M. brig *Brisk* rode at anchor in St. George's Bay, and fishing canoes stood out to sea. . . .

"I hastened to visit the slave yard, where, when a captured vessel arrives, the cargo is placed. A square building, inhabited by a smith, is surrounded with walls and sheds. In these last sleep the late captives, who are supported at the rate of two-pence per day, kept clean, and (the men) at work on the roads for three months, and then sent to the allotments: still supported, for six months in all, and furnished with tools to the amount of one pound ten shillings each man. Many of the children are taken by the white and coloured inhabitants of Freetown as apprentices or servants for seven years, on the payment of ten shillings. The men had all gone to work when I went into the yard; but I found many women from the schooner lately captured by the *Lynx*, sitting and lying on the mats; in one of the sheds, breakfasts had just been served on broad flat tin vessels, and consisted of rice and palm-oil, yams, etc., . . . But there is one grand abuse here—there is no proper separation between the sexes at night. 'Why not?' was inquired. 'One governa not allow this (intercourse), was the answer, 'but him go England.'"

Indeed, it seems that Freetown resembled the West Indies in many things besides scenery. When it is remembered that these negroes had mostly come from distant parts of West Africa, and were, therefore, as little at home in Sierra Leone as in the New World, it may be wondered how much they appreciated the difference. Their rescue, moreover, was attended by even worse risks than their continued slavery, as Alexander had occasion to observe when chasing a slave-ship:

"Our next chase was after another schooner, which we saw at three o'clock p.m. on the 4th November; and which, from her unremitting endeavours for six hours to escape, evidently showed that all was not correct. She cracked on with studding sails; and we bowled on after her at a staggering rate, and soon rose her long low hull. All was excitement on board the frigate; the men hauled with a will, and ran away with the running rigging at such a rate, that they seemed inclined

to tear the yards from the masts. The 'lookouts' at night, on the quarters, gang-ways, and catheads, instead of lazily sitting in the hammock nettings, were standing up, or perched on the shrouds. Most of the officers were clustered on the bowsprit; beside which, the bow chasers were cleared away and shotted. At nine o'clock p.m. the schooner was close ahead of us. She tried us first on one tack and then on another, both in vain: we overhauled her, and fired over her three shots to bring her to; when she reluctantly backed her main-topsail. . . .

"The boarders flew towards the schooner—now rolling and pitching under the tall frigate—in oars, and rapidly leaped on her deck. Stifled with the smell of 'black fellows' the boat's crew made sure of a prize this time. The schooner was a ninety-ton vessel, and her captain on shore. It was quarter of an hour before a light was produced by the mate; when the hatches were lifted, and instead of slaves, there was only an insupportable smell of them, with plenty of water and plantains. The mate knew nothing! 'Where are you from?' asked Lieut. Warden. 'I can't read or write, and the captain's on shore.'—'Where are you bound?' 'I can't read or write.' And this was all the answer that could be extracted from him. After a rigorous search, the *Felicitad* was allowed to leave us; though it was the prevailing opinion on board, that during the chase *she had thrown her slaves overboard*. However, as she had none on board, she could not be touched."

But drowning was by no means the worst, or even the most likely death that threatened the slaves on board these ships. On Prince's Island, a place of dream-like tropical beauty, Alexander learnt from an English sailor further horrifying facts concerning the transport of slaves:

"At early dawn I lifted my head from the hammock netting, where I had slept, and saw Prince's Island within a few miles. It was in deep shadow, and the sun rose slowly behind it, revealing its bare cliffs and wooded sides. It appeared to us as if the foot of man had never trodden here: there was neither city nor sign of habitation among the thick forest; the island looked exceeding fair, as if fresh from the hand of its Maker. Variable winds and currents delayed us for some hours; but at last we approached West Bay, . . . As we became land-locked, the lofty peaks, around which the mist broke and curled, rose above us; and the entangled and rank vegetation (of forms and character new to our European eye) was seen to clothe thickly the sides of the hills, while palms overshadowed the wave itself. Those who were strangers to the luxuriant richness of tropical scenery were lost in astonishment; and though it has been my good fortune to have contemplated some of the most enchanting prospects in both hemispheres, I confess I was perfectly fascinated and surprised at the exuberant beauty of this lonely island. . . .

"A single red-tiled planter's house was seen opposite our anchorage, on a slope some distance from the water. It had a long verandah in front, and a broad stair with balusters. This was one of the country-houses of the lady commonly called the Queen of Prince's Island—the wife of Colonel Pereira, the governor. The land seemed to be cleared on both sides of the house; and there were rows of wooden negro huts adjoining. A log canoe came from the shore, and brought the intelligence that Madame Pereira had left her residence a few days since, and had gone to Port St. Antonio, the capital of the island, ten miles distant. . . .

"As we pulled towards the sandy beach, flying-fish rose in coveys from the smooth waters of the tranquil bay, on each side of us, whilst gulls flew overhead. On landing, we were received by a few slaves in shirts, or waist-cloths, the property of Madame Pereira. The head man, Domingo, who spoke Portuguese imperfectly, said that nothing whatever in the shape of supplies could be procured from the town, except by order from his mistress. About a hundred yards distant, was the watering place, an abundant stream rushing over a rocky channel, in which half-naked negresses, who ran away on our approach, were washing clothes.

"I went up to the house, and found it to be a large empty mansion, with heaps of coffee drying in front of it, and a few pinks and aromatic plants in boxes. In a back court I found two or three black women. . . . The back court was surrounded by high walls, and fitted up for reception of many slaves; the rooms were supplied with tiers of boards, from floor to the ceiling, for sleeping berths; and a long kitchen was furnished with a cooking range for pots.

"An English sailor in a straw hat, checked shirt, and trousers, unexpectedly presented himself. He said his name was John Crye, late mate of the *Hero* of Liverpool, . . . that he had been sent on shore at the Gaboon river by his captain, with whom he had quarrelled; and that he now wanted to enter the *Thalia*, having come over from the main to Port Antonio in a slaver, and from thence to West Bay, in hopes of finding an English vessel. It appears that slavers run over to Port Antonio, empty, to lay in their wood, water, and supply of farina, or flour of cassava; that schooners of sixty tons, belonging to the island, trade with the main for slaves and ivory; that the former are landed on the south side of the island to avoid the cruisers in West Bay; that slaves cost three musquets, or fifteen dollars, about Cape Lopez, and when brought over to Prince's Island sell for thirty dollars, but when transported to St. Thomas's produce eighty; and that in the Havana, the average price this year (1834) is three hundred. The master of a large slaver receives one hundred dollars per month from his employers, and ten slaves for every hundred he lands; the mate eighty, and two slaves per cent; and the men fifty dollars per month. The officers and men

all sleep on deck : the former in the cribs, . . . and the men roughing it out among the spare sails. In this accursed trade the slaves are packed with their knees bent, and laid on their sides below, in a hold two feet high ! . . . A ship of sixteen guns and one hundred and fifty men from the Havana, was reported to be lying in the Gaboon at this time, determined to fight its way through the cruisers."

With the emancipation of the slaves in the European American colonies, and finally, in America itself, the three hundred years old slave-trade at last came to an end. Meanwhile Africa had become the scene of immense new enterprises. During the nineteenth century the European powers, until then content to perch along the coast in their trading stations, penetrated inland, explored vast unknown territories, and were so successful in establishing their spheres of influence by their power of wealth and arms, that by 1910 they had parcelled out the whole continent with the exceptions of Liberia and Abyssinia. This extraordinary development was made possible by the great explorers, many of them British, who from the end of the eighteenth century forced their way into Africa from all sides : such men as James Bruce, who in 1770-72 travelled to the source of the Blue Nile ; Mungo Park, the explorer of the Niger ; Walter Oudney, Dixon Denham and Hugh Clapperton, the first white men to reach Lake Chad ; Richard Burton—one of the most fantastic figures of his time—and J. H. Speke, the discoverers of Lake Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza ; the Nile explorer Samuel Baker, and those two celebrated men, whose names are so incongruously linked, the idealistic Scottish missionary-explorer David Livingstone, and the cosmopolitan journalist-adventurer Sir Henry Morton Stanley. Portuguese, French, German, Austrian, Italian, Arab and American traveller-journalists also did important work ; the first recorded crossing of Africa was made by two half-caste Portuguese traders, Pedro Baptista and A. José, who between 1802 and 1811 travelled from Angola eastward to the Zambesi.

The occupation of these newly discovered lands was obviously a formidable undertaking ; the sufferings of the pioneers can have been hardly exceeded by those of the early British settlers in Virginia and the West Indies. Yet by the last quarter of the century colonisation had been speeded up into a race for territory in which the competing nations, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Belgium, were often in more danger from each other than from the lands they struggled to possess. The Berlin Conference in 1884, attended by fifteen European nations, was an attempt to regulate the partition of the continent by international agreement.

The slave-trading region on the West Coast was an area of British and French rivalry. During the course of the nineteenth century these two nations expanded their trading settlements on the coast into colonies



spreading far back into the interior, palm oil taking the place of slaves as the chief African export. Britain acquired Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria; France hemmed in these colonies with vast possessions in the interior which reached the Gulf of Guinea at the Ivory Coast and Dahomey. Germany in 1884 secured Togo with a short sea-coast between the Gold Coast and Dahomey and a considerable hinterland. Only Liberia remained independent of European rule, thanks to the action of the American Colonisation Society, which in 1821 selected this area as a place of settlement for freed slaves. In the following years a series of migrations of American negroes and half-castes, freed slaves and their descendants, took place; and in 1847 the governor, Joseph Jenkins Roberts, an octoroon from Virginia, with the consent of the Colonisation Society, proclaimed the settlement an independent republic. He and his successors, however, met with great difficulties from the frontier claims of Britain and France, who squeezed the territory from three sides, and were unwilling to recognise the authority of the coloured settlers. Liberia only survived through the intervention of the United States, which, without actually making it into a colony, has protected it and controlled its finances.

Dahomey was the last native territory to surrender to European conquest. From 1818 it was a prosperous negro kingdom ruled by King Gezo, who extended his frontiers largely by the help of his Amazon army, a traditional state army of women which he enlarged and reorganised. These were the crack troops of the nation, and were always assigned the most dangerous and honourable posts in battle. Richard Burton, who in 1862 saw the whole army of Dahomey marching out of Kana on a military expedition, observed about two thousand five hundred Amazon troops, poorly armed with blunderbusses, flint muskets, and bows and arrows. But these fanatical negresses none the less managed to hold up the French forces in a fierce battle in 1890, and the country was not finally subdued until four years later.

By the end of the nineteenth century the competitive, pioneering phase in the colonisation of Africa was over. West Africa was partitioned between the European powers, and the audacious individuals, mainly traders, who had conquered these huge territories with little or no official support, had handed them over to their respective home governments. It can hardly be said that the British possessions gained many advantages from this change. The Crown Colony administration did little that could not have been achieved with the private resources of the former merchant-rulers. Most travellers, including Richard Burton, were shocked by the squalid and neglected condition of the West African colonies, and the absence of any large-scale developments.

One of the most eloquent of these critics was Mary Kingsley, niece

of the writer Charles Kingsley, who devoted the greater part of her life to the study of West Africa and its problems. Judged by the standards of any age, Mary Kingsley was a remarkable traveller and explorer; in her own time, when it was still unusual for a woman to go abroad for any purpose more serious than sight-seeing or visiting friends, she was a truly amazing figure. Between 1893 and 1895 she travelled extensively in the West African colonies, the French Congo, and the German Cameroons, climbed the Great Cameroon, a mountain of over thirteen thousand feet, by a route never before attempted, and acquired a unique understanding of African customs, law and religion. Her knowledge was further enriched by fifteen years' reading, which included the history of West Africa from the time of the Phœnician travellers to her own day, and detailed studies of contemporary administration, finance, and trade-statistics. This extraordinary wealth of observation and scholarship is recorded in three fascinating, if at times irritating, volumes: *Travels in West Africa*, *West African Studies*, and *The Story of West Africa*.

*Mary Kingsley*<sup>1</sup>; *West African Studies*. (Pub. 1899.)

Admittedly an amateur writer: "I would write better if I could, but I cannot. I find when I try to write like other people that I do not say what seems to me true, and thereby lose all right to say anything"; Mary Kingsley is both pithy and long-winded, sometimes floundering into what she herself recognises as a "word-swamp," occasionally sinking to facetious bickering, sometimes rising to marvellously vivid descriptions, and always violently sincere. Few writers can have been more in love with their subject, and West Africa has never been better described than by this brilliant, provoking, if occasionally exasperating woman.

Describing her first voyage to West Africa on a West African cargo boat she paints an unsurpassed picture of the tropical wet season:

"After we passed Cape Verde we ran into the West African wet season rain sheet. There ought to be some other word than rain for that sort of thing. We have to stiffen this poor substantive up with adjectives, even for use with our own thunderstorms, and as is the morning dew to our heaviest thunder 'torrential downpour of rain,' so is that to the rain of the wet season in West Africa. For weeks it came down on us that voyage in one swishing, rushing cataract of water. The interspaces between the pipes of water—for it did not go into details with drops—were filled with grey mist, and as this rain

<sup>1</sup> *Mary Kingsley* (1862-1900) studied sociology at Cambridge; travelled in West Africa between 1893 and 1895; died of enteric fever when working as a nurse in South Africa during the Boer War.

struck the sea it kicked up such a water dust that you saw not the surface of the sea round you, but only a mist sea gliding by. It seemed as though we had left the clear cut world and entered into a mist universe. Sky, air, and sea were all the same, as our vessel swept on in one plane, just because she capriciously preferred it. Many days we could not see twenty yards ahead of the ship. Once or twice another vessel would come out of the mist ahead, slogging past us into the mist behind, visible in our little water world for a few minutes only as a misty thing, and then we leisurely tramped on alone 'o'er the viewless, hueless deep,' with our horizon alongside."

Equally moving is her description of Sierra Leone, of the mind-corroding, body-corroding land near Sherboro river, which destroyed, among many others, poor Nicholas Owen, the melancholy slave-trader of the eighteenth century :

"From Sherboro river to Cape Mount, viewed from the sea, every mile looks as like the next as peas in a pod, and should a cruel fate condemn you to live ashore here in a factory you get so used to the eternal sameness that you automatically believe that nothing else but this sort of world, past, present, or future, can ever have existed : and that cities and mountains are but the memories of dreams. A more horrible life than a life in such a region for a man who never takes to it, it is impossible to conceive ; for a man who does take to it, it is a kind of dream life. I am judging from the few men I have met with who have been stationed here in the few isolated little factories that are established. Some of them look like haunted men, who, when they are among white men again, cling to their society : others are lazy, dreamy men, rather bored by it.

"The kind of country that produces this effect must be exceedingly simple in make : it is not the mere isolation from fellow white-men that does it—for example, the handful of men who are on the Ogowé<sup>1</sup> do not get like this though many of them are equally lone men, yet they are bright and lively enough. Anyhow, exceedingly simple in make as is this region of Africa from Sherboro to Cape Mount, it consists of four things in four long lines—lines that go away into eternity for as far as eye can see. There is the band of yellow sand on which your little factory is built. This band is walled to landwards by a wall of dark forest, mounted against the sky to seaward by a wall of white surf ; beyond that there is the horizon-bounded ocean. Neither the forest wall nor surf wall changes enough to give any lively variety : they just run up and down the gamut of the same set of variations. In the light of brightest noon the forest wall stands dark against the

<sup>1</sup> A river in French Equatorial Africa.

dull blue sky, in the depth of the darkest night you can see it stand darker still, against the stars ; on moonlight nights and on tornado nights, when you see the forest wall by the lightning light, it looks as if it had been done over with a coat of tar. The surf wall is equally consistent, it may be bad, or good as surf, but it's generally the former, which merely means it is a higher, broader wall, and more noisy, but it's the same sort of wall making the same sort of noise all the time. It is always white ; in the sunlight, snowy white, suffused with a white mist wherein are little broken, quivering bits of rainbows. In the moonlight, it gleams with a whiteness there is in nothing else on earth. If you can imagine a non-transparent diamond wall, I think you will get some near idea to it, and even on the darkest of dark nights you can still see the surf wall clearly enough, for it shows like a ghost of its daylight self, seeming to have in it a light of its own, and you love or hate it. Night and day and season changes pass over these things, like reflections in a mirror, without altering the mirror frame ; but nothing comes that ever stills for one-half second the thunder of the surf wall or makes the forest wall brighter than the rest of your world. Mind you, it is intensely beautiful, intensely soothing, intensely interesting if you can read it and like it, but life for a man who cannot and does not is a living death."

Death and living death were, as she well knew, the lot of the white traders in West Africa. To her they appeared as heroes. Proud of her ancestors—Danish Vikings, soldiers in the Low Countries, and slave-owners in the West Indies—despising "these weird un-Shakespearean days," Mary Kingsley firmly believed in the glory of British commerce. In spite of all her reading, she sees the old days of the slave-trade through a mist of patriotic romanticism :

"In the old days, when the Bristol ship got to the Coast she would call at the first village on it. Then the native chiefs and head man would come on board and haggle with the captain as to the quantity of goods he would let them have on trust, they covenanting to bring in exchange for them in a given time a certain number of slaves or so much produce. This arrangement being made, off sailed the Guineaman to his next village, where a similar game took place all the way down the coast to the Grand Bassam.

"When she had paid out the trust goods to the last village, she would stand out to sea and work back to her first village of call on the Bristol coast to pick up the promised produce, this arrangement giving the native traders time to collect it. In nine cases out of ten, however, it was not ready for her, so on she went to the next. By this time the Guineaman would present the spectacle of a farmhouse that had gone mad, grown masts, and run away to sea ; for the decks were protected



from the burning sun by a well-built thatched roof, and she lounges long heavy with the rank sea growth of these seas. Sometimes she would be unroofed by a tornado, sometimes seized by a pirate parasitic on the Guinea trade, but barring these interruptions to business she called regularly on her creditors, from some getting the promised payment, from others part of it, from others again only the renewal of the promise, and then when she had again reached her last point of call put out to sea once more and worked back again to the first creditor village. In those days she kept at this weary round until she got in all her debts, a process that often took her four or five years, and cost the lives of half her crew from fever, and then her consorts drafted a man or so on board and kept her going until she was full enough of pepper, gold, gum, ivory and native goods to sail for Bristol. There, when the Guineaman came in, were grand doings for the small boys, what with parrots, oranges, bananas, etc., but sad times for most of those whose relatives and friends had left Bristol on her.

"In much the same way, and with much the same risks, the Bristol Coast trade goes on now, only there is little of it left owing to the French system of suppressing trade. Palm oil is the modern equivalent to slaves, and just as in the old days the former were transhipped from the coasting Guineaman to the transatlantic slavers, so now the palm oil is shipped off on the homeward bound African steamers, while, as for the joys and sorrows, century-change affects them not. So long as Western Africa remains the deadliest region on earth there will be joy over those who come up out of it; heartache and anxiety over those who are down there fighting as men fought of old for those things worth the fighting, God, Glory and Gold; and grief over those who are dead among all of us at home who are ill-advised enough to really care for men who have the pluck to go there."

Convinced of the gallant rôle played by the traders, she had nothing but contempt for the Crown Colony administration, which had stepped in to rule West Africa after they had accomplished the hard work of pioneering, and blandly disregarded their interests. The government of the West African colonies should, she considers, be handed over to "commercial experts." A Grand African Council composed of members of the Chambers of Commerce, with two sub-councils reporting to it, one of "legal and medical Englishmen," the other of African chiefs; a State Labour Department to "recruit and drill" a native mobile labour army, are some of her suggestions.

Like many earlier travellers to this coast, she found much to admire in the Africans; indeed after Teutons—"of course, everything that is not Teutonic is, to put it mildly, not up to what is,"—she preferred West African negroes to any other race on earth. The Crown Colony

administration had, in her view, failed the Africans as much as the Europeans ; in fact, "the sooner the Crown Colony system is removed from the sphere of practical politics and put under a glass case in the South Kensington Museum, labelled 'Extinct,' the better for everyone." Had Mary Kingsley lived today she might have made a first-rate fighting journalist :

"West Africa today is just a quarry of paving stones for Hell, and those stones were cemented in place with men's blood mixed with wasted gold.

Prove it ! Prove it yourself by going there—I don't mean to Blazes—but to West Africa."

*W. M. Macmillan ; Warning from the West Indies. (Pub. 1936.)*

The destruction of negro institutions may have lowered morals and hampered prosperity in West Africa ; in the West Indies it brought about wholesale disaster. The eighteenth-century planters had made their fortunes by using unlimited unpaid labour to cultivate sugar by the cheapest, and therefore most primitive, methods. In consequence, it had been necessary to import huge numbers of slaves, who came to form the overwhelming majority of the population. These people had not only been wrenched from their African civilisation, but provided with nothing in its place except unskilled work in squalid conditions. Since their emancipation the problem of the West Indies has been to transform this great derelict population into a normal society. Inevitably, the old prosperity has vanished ; the luxurious pleasure islands visited by Janet Schaw have gradually decayed into one of the neediest regions in the world, so that in 1936 it could be said that "a social and economic study of the West Indies is necessarily a study of poverty."

W. M. Macmillan, an authority on South Africa and colonial problems in general, has written such a study for the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Although almost devoid of narrative or personal interest, this work must be regarded as a travel book, and one representative of the modern age ; for the sociological investigator is a type of traveller as characteristic of the present day as the cultured tourist was characteristic of the eighteenth century and the amateur scientist of the seventeenth. Indeed, these modern travellers are performing a task equivalent to that of the seventeenth-century travellers : as the seventeenth-century travellers scrapped mediæval fantasies and tried to interpret the world through science, so modern travellers ignore the personal and romantic conceptions of the last two centuries and attempt to interpret the world in terms of social and economic conditions. The old picturesque and sentimental vision has gone ; the pleasing prospect, the heart-

affecting beggars, the ruined palaces with their train of poetic and moral speculations. Statistics have taken the place of impressions ; interviews, not anecdotes, provide whatever humour can be snatched by the way ; the note book is carried instead of the sketch book or guide book ; culture is confounded with higher education, food is no longer a pleasure but an indication of public health. As dispassionate as any Stuart dilettante, as inquisitive as any first member of the Royal Society, the modern traveller probes the world ; but society, not nature, is his study ; economic relationships, not mechanical contrivances, the object of his inquiries ; slumps and booms have become more dramatic than volcanoes and earthquakes, human beings more curious than animals. Appearances are questioned, accepted opinions discredited ; nothing is what it used to seem ; a new picture of the world is being evolved, which to Robert Curzon, Beckford, Janet Schaw, Evelyn or Sir Hans Sloane alike, would be as strange as that of Sir John Mandeville.

In the West Indies, as elsewhere, appearances are misleading :

"The beauty of the West Indies is a legend. Looking out from the dark open terrace of a fine old Jamaica planter's house on one of their amazing nights of full moon and perfect temperature, it is easy to forget grim reality—old slavery and present squalor," . . .

Superficially, all seems well : a delightful climate, beautiful scenery, a small population of kindly planters, who, though fallen on bad times, have inherited a sophisticated cultural tradition from their more prosperous predecessors ; a large population of happy-looking blacks, who, though their times have never been good, enjoy not only freedom from slavery but freedom from the colour bar, and may, if they can, rise to influential positions. The reality is very different : the majority of the population, incredibly poor and politically unrepresented, lives under the minority control of reactionary whites and a strident black middle class ; wages are deplorably low, sanitation neglected, education inadequate, disease and malnutrition prevalent.

W. M. Macmillan attacks a variety of legends : racial theories that consign the blacks to permanent backwardness and half-castes to the rôle of "God's stepchildren," the belief that negroes are immune to tropical diseases, and the accepted idea of West Indian history : "The history of the West Indies which, as almost the oldest of tropical colonies, should be a guide to modern experiments, has usually been written as a British naval and military romance, with the islands as pawns in a game of chess or, possibly, Carribean 'gems in the Imperial crown.'"

The decline of the sugar industry, he argues, was due to other causes besides emancipation and the subsequent introduction of Free Trade with the loss of privileges in the British market. It had, in

fact, begun before Emancipation took place, and was largely due to the weaknesses inherent in the plantation system: the slap-dash methods of the plantation owners, who exploited the soil for quick profits on which they could retire to England, and relied on quantity rather than quality of labour. The results are to be seen in presentday conditions: ruined plantation owners, without the capital resources to rehabilitate themselves, or the means to employ the vast numbers of coloured people, who still, only as labourers instead of as slaves, depend on them for their existence. Wages are as low as one shilling a day, work provided only for three or four days in the week, everywhere the employed merge with the unemployed, creating a stranded and helpless proletariat.

The official cure is peasant ownership; but land is expensive, and holding consequently small—often no more than half an acre—providing a miserable subsistence. Among a group of smallholders in Trinidad an income of thirty pounds a year was exceptional.

Even the few successful coloured peasants do not seem to Macmillan a healthy sign:

“The peasant will always arouse kindly sentiments. From a famous sentence of Arthur Young, the agricultural reformer and encloser of open fields in eighteenth-century England, we all learn how the magic of ownership turns the very sand as in revolutionary France, into fine gold! . . .

“The successful and prosperous peasant is almost irresistible testimony to the merits of ownership. The best among them show keen readiness to discuss crops and methods with the agricultural officer or anyone else who seems to have an opinion worth consulting, and the welcome to visitors may be boisterous. I well remember some Jamaican visits. One man, of pure peasant origin and mentality, had more than a peasant holding: inheriting ten or twelve acres from his father he had now nearly forty acres of his own. His kind, though they are taken as examples, are something more than is commonly understood by peasant—kulaks perhaps. His house, on a beautiful eminence commanding a view of his lands, was a respectable one-storey wooden building, with a well-kept lawn. Bananas were as usual in Jamaica the main crop. His twenty acres or more, with trees in full bearing, possibly bring in a gross income of four figures and keep himself and a family of six in comfort—but also so well occupied that none in this particular case had had any advanced education. His subsidiary crops—at once insurance against a banana failure and evidence of the possibilities of smallholdings in favourable conditions—included at least corn (maize), yams, and other roots, peas, beans, okra, tomatoes, and of course peppers. He could therefore be largely self-



supporting, with a surplus for the local market—subject of course to the disadvantage that many others grow the same crops at the same seasons. In addition this plutocrat had some less common resources—a few coconuts for food and oil; oranges, I think, and certainly some avocado pears and paw-paw; honey and about half an acre of ginger, which with some preparation for market would bring the family at least a little pocket money; odds and ends of coffee and cocoa; besides poultry, pigs, goats, and the prescribed peasant's cow. His wife may have had, as I have seen elsewhere, a well-stocked cupboard of preserves. He had certainly masses of untidy sugar-cane growing in patches near the house, and a hand-press nearby which was not for ornament only; the cane provided a little drink as well as sugar. Almost one might be persuaded to turn peasant.

"This type has merits which strengthen the fabric of West Indian society, and rugged individualism, beaten from most other fields, still cherishes peasant ownership as a last hope. But the isolated individual as a peasant shares most of the weaknesses of the planter-farmer in a bigger way of business. This man's bananas were only fair, his yams perhaps good; most of the rest grew untended, to yield or not as nature might allow.

"Take slavery or serfdom as the starting point, as many inadvertently do, and your forty-acre peasant is an amazing phenomenon. By the standard of agriculture needed to redeem the West Indies—that of the Jamaica Department or the Trinidad College—he is a rather indifferent old-fashioned farmer. It is quite true that he may be prosperous enough, like one I heard of, for a European trader to advance him fifty pounds 'on no security but his own note of hand'; but this shows him only the more an all too common type of farmer who piles up debts. A sufficient policy for the West Indies—as for Africa—ought to offer more than a repetition of a wearisome cycle. He and his kind are numerous, and may be a hopeful new type—or may only portend the emergence of a coloured plutocracy. The black or coloured farmers are welcome in themselves as evidence that the children of ex-slaves can do even as well as they do; but there is no reason to think that they will do any better in the long run than the plantation owners before them."

In fact it is not, W. M. Macmillan suggests, by encouraging this new class of peasant, which must in the end repeat the mistakes of the old European planters, that prosperity can be brought to the West Indies. It is time to realise "the economic futility of the planter-farmer system," whereby the complicated science of agriculture has been left in the hands of individuals with doubtful abilities and limited resources, and who, worst of all, fail to appreciate the importance of

their labourers as potential consumers. Agriculture must be reorganised for production and marketing in accordance with the most modern methods, and with "a pooling of capital resources"; "the individual, almost sovereign planter has failed, and like the old rule of thumb farmer elsewhere must inevitably submit to some collective organisation which will eliminate the incompetent." The agricultural labourer must go too, and become part owner in the new agricultural organisation.

Large grants from Britain are necessary to set these schemes in action. Much must first be spent on health services and education; for until the indigent masses become producers and consumers the West Indies cannot be self-supporting. This policy is essential for achieving prosperity; it is also the logical and necessary sequel to the Emancipation of the slaves:

"The moral crusade which triumphed a century ago in the overthrow of slavery cooled off before completing the 'positive' work of which Foxwell Buxton and others had a vision. The real work of reconstruction still lies ahead."

The West African colonies are hardly less depressing. Mary Kingsley's impassioned warnings have passed unheeded; little has been done to improve colonial administration; regions rich in natural resources provide a wretched living for whites and blacks alike; the descendants of liberated slaves enjoy their freedom in degrading poverty.

Cecil Beaton, travelling to the Middle East in 1942, visited Sierra Leone, was appalled, like many travellers of the last century, by the abysmal squalor of Freetown, and observed that neglect of this fine harbour had produced serious consequences in the war. Like many earlier travellers, too, he perceived likeable qualities in the West African negroes; and in Liberia he saw what they could achieve in favourable circumstances.

*Near East; Cecil Beaton. (Pub. 1943.)*

His first view of Freetown showed him a sordid town, a neglected harbour, cynical British colonials, and gracefully cheerful natives.

"Meanwhile to the shore! To the shore! The land-parties of gay and dazzling white-clad sailors in a variety of different craft, all billowing towards the mainland, produced a scene representing the fun of the Navy that Captain Marryat's works manage to convey, but which, nevertheless, exists as part of the life of a man at sea for only an infinitesimal part of his time. It was very gay and buoyant: on the dock, great activity. The English colony in sun-glasses and

topees, 'these moneyless men living here solely for the purpose of lucre,' told us that these so-called 'noble savages' were descended from a ship-load of whores which arrived in the last century. They would like to raise a stick against these indolent niggers, but even 'a push or a poke is a forbidden luxury, the native might fall down; he has certainly been injured internally, and you must pay exemplary damages.' These natives have an extraordinary beauty and animal-like grace which transcends the corrugated squalor and rotting poverty of their colonial English setting. The decay of the junky huts and taverns, the gimcrack jetties and primitive tenders, is an indictment of our administrative powers . . . .

"Here is one of the finest natural anchorages in the world. Yet of so short range has been our policy that once again we have been 'caught unawares.' As a result of the collapse of France, which may not have been anticipated, we now see in the harbour the great ships of the Merchant Navy carrying guns and men and equipment, and sorely-needed provisions, with their escorting warships, delayed for days, even weeks, through the lack of water supply and other adequate harbour facilities . . . .

"But the natives are unperturbed by the poverty and ugliness and dirt around our most important West African harbour, and they create an unending pageant that never ceases to beguile the eye. . . . Against the ugly background provided for them of tin cans, dirt, broken-down huts, desiccated taxi-cabs, bad drains, and 'muck and mixen,' the natives are gay. . . . The women wear brilliant turbans and draperies of printed cotton from Manchester. These naïve materials are delightful. A pastel mauve ground is covered with a repeat design of port being poured by a delicate hand from a decanter into a wine glass: against an apricot sky hearts fly attached to wings, or parachutists fall in a cascade—a robin sits on a nest full of eggs.

"Cricket bats, telegraph poles, sea serpents, Red Cross Ambulances, Singer sewing machines, are some of the other motifs of decoration. It is a solecism that the most imaginative fabric designs made in England should be exclusive to West Africa.

"The tropical vegetation flourishes by the roadside. A shoot of huge yellow and red speckled leaves, that in our country would only grow in Rothschild glasshouses, sprouts up at the corner of the bicycle repair shop.

"Higher up, away from the English buildings, that at best have the ugly charm of pictures from 1840 copies of the *Illustrated London News*, the flowering trees intermingle, forming a tropical arcade of yellow, white and puce blossom."

Cecil Beaton continued his journey by air. His first stop was in

Liberia, where, in the most unaffording natural conditions, the Americans have made developments which could serve as a model to the British colonies.

"A few cumulus clouds, like lumps of cotton wool, had broken away from the cloud ceiling and floated by over the jungle carpet. We lost height. We were landing in the middle of a jungle! A negro official, rather pathetic and appealing in his uniform, topee, and with his despatch case, stood by the door of our aircraft as we landed for refuelling on neutral ground. We were then received by a host of welcoming, well-pressed young Americans, each with a clear, small-pored skin, deep voice, an expressive way of using the English language and the polished manners of the ushers at the Roxy Cinema.

"Here we discovered the tremendous achievement of the Americans during the last six months in forging the last links round the world with these air-fields across Africa. In the centre of a hitherto impenetrable jungle, wonderful aerodromes have sprung up and are in the process of being enlarged. Pan-American Airways are operating this route established by British Airways, who are thus able to concentrate on vital communication lines farther east. The Firestone Rubber Company has undertaken to cultivate this particular place, and it seems when it has made a decision it disregards all obstacles. Large areas of jungle have been burned and cleared away before the trees have started to sprout again, and the red earth has been treated with a variety of different processes. The negroes have poured down the tar, the cement, the asphalt and the concrete by the ton, and they have laid out a magnificent run-away equipped with electrical flare-path for night landings. All the latest American methods are employed here, and the young Liberians drive backwards and forwards with rollers or in tractors, spreading tar, with wheels that bank like the wings of an aeroplane, so that they can turn about within their own lock.

"The Liberian boys enjoy being put to useful work. It seems to be the greatest fun running the refuelling bowser. Perhaps the proverbial idleness of the native has been caused only in the past by lack of work; that, given an alternative, he prefers not to remain in voluptuous apathy, under the palm trees which produce his 'drink and raiment.'

"Some immaculate Ford motors rushed the air passengers to a rest house that might have been built in Florida or California—clean white, wired against insects, with the latest spruce copy of *Life* magazine, a Cape-hart playing jazz music, and a restaurant set out with metal tables and chairs (so light are the chairs that, when you lift them, they fly up in your hand); an array of delicious foodstuffs was there before us. . . . To find this in the heart of the jungle was an astonishment.



On the notice board they gave the lists of the films to be shown—three different ones each week. The frigidaires throbbed and ticked with a life of their own. While eating our fill, two four-engined bombers arrived from the United States. I realised here, for the first time, what it meant when Germany declared war on the United States of America. The newspapers have given us figures denoting the magnitude of the war effort, but this was visual proof. The most heartening glimpse was indicative of the tremendous power of the United States."

## 7. AMERICA

AMERICA was a terrible disappointment. Englishmen had been slow to realise the possibilities of this unexpected continent, regarding it, for at least fifty years after its discovery, as little more than an impediment in the western sea-route to the golden East. Even when its riches had been revealed, when the altars and madonnas and palaces of Spain had become dazzlingly laden with gold and silver and pearls from the New World, England, still clinging to the old-fashioned crack-brained oriental dream, was financing ruinous and unsuccessful attempts to find a North-west Passage to Cathay.<sup>1</sup>

But when, in the last twenty years of the sixteenth century, the idea that wealth might more easily be gained by exploring the continent than by sailing round its Arctic coast at last took hold of English imagination, then the oriental dream was transferred in all its madness to America.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately by this time a large part of the continent was already occupied. Spain and Portugal had gained control of the whole southern half; there were Spanish settlements in the West Indies and in Florida,<sup>3</sup> while Newfoundland had been appropriated by a lawless crowd of Spanish, French, Portuguese, and English fishermen, in which the English were outnumbered seven to one. There remained the territory between Florida and Newfoundland, that vast tract of the mainland which England was prepared to claim on the doubtful assumption that John Cabot had annexed it to the English crown during a voyage of discovery in the period of Columbus.<sup>4</sup> To this huge silent

<sup>1</sup> Frobisher's three voyages : 1576, 1577, 1578, and John Davis' three voyages : 1585, 1586, 1587. The next attempt was made by the Dutch in 1609, employing the English navigator, Henry Hudson. The project was subsequently revived in England, and various attempts were made during the next three centuries, but the North-west Passage was finally discovered by the Norwegian, Amundsen, only in 1903-5.

<sup>2</sup> This change of opinion was, of course, gradual. Richard Eden had published two books : *A Treatise of New India*, and *The Decades of the New World and West India*, inviting Englishmen to take advantage of the vast wealth of America, as early as 1553 and 1555. In 1578, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who was also a keen supporter of the North-west Passage scheme, had already obtained a patent from Queen Elizabeth to discover and occupy "rich and unknown lands" in northern America; the Queen was to receive one-fifth of the gold and silver that he anticipated finding there; but he did not sail to America until 1583.

<sup>3</sup> The Spanish had driven the French from Florida since Hawkins had visited it in 1564.

<sup>4</sup> The details of Cabot's voyages are rather obscure. On his first voyage in 1497 he discovered Cape Breton Island and Newfoundland, both of which he thought to be part of north-east Asia. He received a reward from Henry VII of ten pounds. On his second voyage in 1498 he reached Greenland, proceeded

land, full of great rivers and giant trees, deer, coney, Indians, and flocks of cranes, the first English colonisers attached the exotic mediæval legend of boundless wealth.

A brutal disenchantment was to follow. This inviting territory turned out to be a death trap, eating up whole settlements, breaking the boldest ambitions: the dream of wealth soon fizzled out amid starvation, massacre and sheer privation. What was left, after the first years of suicidal expectations, were a few struggling settlements of peasants and artisans, living in fortified wooden huts isolated in forest clearings or huddled round harbours; an overworked, underfed population, short of arms, hatchets, fish hooks, cattle and shoes, grimly religious but liable to hysterical outbreaks in the form of witchcraft, drunkenness and murder. Such was the bleak and barbarous beginning of the great American nation. But its evolution was dynamic. With astonishing rapidity district after district passed from neediness to prosperity, from prosperity to luxury, until, in less than three hundred years, the old dream of wealth actually did come true, and well-to-do travellers gazed in stupefaction at the unheard-of opulence of industrial America.

The first Englishmen to prospect the chosen territory were, however, pathetically unsuspicious of the difficulties that lay ahead. Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe, who crossed the Atlantic in 1584 and spent a few weeks in the land which was to be named Virginia, described it in almost lyrical language. It is true that they saw no sign of gold, except the head-dress of an Indian king which might equally well have been made of copper—for they were not allowed to handle it—but all living things appeared to flourish in noble, almost heavenly, proportions. Grapes tumbled out of the rich forests into the very waves of the sea; there was an unbelievable profusion of birds and animals, fish and fruit; the corn grew three times in five months, and the trees were more splendid than any to be seen in the most celebrated forests of the Old World. As for the "handsome" and "lusty" Indians, they seemed "most gentle, loving, faithful, void of all guile and treason, and such as live after the manner of the golden age."

Future settlers, of course, were to be cruelly disappointed by the Indians, but not, curiously enough, by the rest of nature. At the most disheartening moments Englishmen were never quite unmoved by the magnificent fertility of the American countryside, and the theme of this first innocently glowing account reappears over and over again to illuminate the more sordid narratives of later travellers. Even John Smith, who endured, during the first years of Virginia Colony, the very worst that America could inflict, was able to write afterwards;

to Baffin Island, then sailed southwards, skirting Newfoundland, which he still thought to be the mainland, and may have followed the coast of America as far south as Chesapeake Bay.

"Within is a country that may have the prerogative over the most pleasant places known, for large and pleasant navigable rivers, heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation ; . . . Here are mountains, hills, plains, valleys, rivers and brooks, all running most pleasantly into a fair bay, compassed but for the mouth with fruitful and delightful land."

*The First Voyage made to the coasts of America, with two barks, wherein were Captains Master Philip Amadas, and Master Arthur Barlowe, who discovered part of the country now called Virginia, Anno 1584. Written by one of the said captains, and sent to Sir Walter Raleigh, knight, at whose charge and direction the said voyage was set forth.*

This was not the first English attempt to mark out a colony in the land between Florida and Newfoundland. In the previous year Sir Humphrey Gilbert had sailed for America on the same adventure with five ships and a grant from Queen Elizabeth ; but he had done no more than take formal possession of Newfoundland. His best ship having been wrecked soon afterwards, he had decided against continuing his voyage southwards along the American coast, and he had prudently set sail for England, only to be drowned in an Atlantic storm.

On his death, his half-brother, Sir Walter Raleigh,<sup>1</sup> at once obtained a similar grant and despatched another expedition under the command of Amadas and Barlowe. He did not himself accompany this or any of his subsequent colonising ventures, for prolonged hardship was little to his liking. A poet and occultist, Raleigh had a romantic imagination and a boundless appetite for power ; to conceive, organise and finance daring enterprises was his favourite rôle, and if he took to action he preferred the brief conspicuous exploits of war to obscure pioneering in a barbarous continent.

Amadas and Barlowe crossed the Atlantic by the southern route via the Canaries and the West Indies which had been used by Sir John Hawkins on his slave-trading voyages some twenty years earlier. Everything went well on this expedition : after an uneventful crossing they struck the West Indies, where they found agreeable refreshment ;

<sup>1</sup> Sir Walter Raleigh (c. 1552-1618), voyager, explorer, soldier, courtier, businessman, poet and scholar, one of the most adventurous and talented men of his age. For many years he was the Queen's favourite, but he was eventually supplanted by Essex. When James I came to the throne he involved himself in conspiracies which led to his arrest and trial ; he was sentenced to death, but instead was imprisoned in the Tower. He secured his release after thirteen years by promising the King to find a gold mine in Guiana without infringing on Spanish rights. This was obviously impossible ; the English party were attacked and defeated by Spaniards in Guiana, and Raleigh was executed on his return.



they then proceeded to the coast of what is now North Carolina,<sup>1</sup> spent some weeks viewing the country and trading with the Indians on the happiest terms, returned to England, again without incident, and delighted Queen Elizabeth with their description of the newly discovered land which she promptly named Virginia.

After leaving the West Indies, they had sailed for nearly two weeks towards the unknown coast of America without sight of land :

"The second of July, we found shoal water, where we smelt so sweet, and so strong a smell, as if we had been in the midst of some delicate garden abounding with all kind of odoriferous flowers, by which we were assured, that the land could not be far distant : and keeping good watch, and bearing but slack sail, the fourth of the same month we arrived upon the coast, which we supposed to be a continent and firm land."

On landing they immediately took possession of it in the name of Queen Elizabeth :

"Which being performed, according to the ceremonies used in such enterprises, we viewed the land about us, being, whereas we first landed, very sandy and low towards the water's side, but so full of grapes, as the very beating and surge of the sea overflowed them, of which we found such plenty, as well there as in all places else, both on the sand and on the green soil on the hills, as in the plains, as well on every little shrub, as also climbing towards the tops of high cedars, that I think in all the world the like abundance is not to be found : and my self having seen those parts of Europe that most abound, find such difference as were incredible to be written . . . .

"Under the bank or hill whereon we stood, we beheld the valleys replenished with goodly cedar trees, and having discharged our harquebuz-shot, such a flock of cranes (the most part white) rose under us, with such a cry redoubled by many echoes, as if an army of men had shouted all together.

"This island has many goodly woods full of deer, conies, hares, and fowl, even in the midst of summer in incredible abundance. The woods are not such as you find in Bohemia, Moscovia or Hercynia, barren and fruitless, but the highest and reddest cedars in the world, far bettering the cedars of the Azores, of the Indies, or Lybanus ; pines, cypress, sassaphras, the lentisk, or the tree that beareth the mastike, the tree that beareth the rind of black cinnamon, of which Master Winter<sup>2</sup> brought from the Straits of Magellan ; and many other of excellent smell and quality."

All Raleigh's attempts to found a colony in this earthly paradise

<sup>1</sup> They touched successively at the islands of Wocokon and Roanoak.

<sup>2</sup> John Wynter commanded the *Elizabeth* on Drake's voyage round the world in 1578. He turned back in the Straits of Magellan. (See *The Pacific*).

proved disastrous. The dream of gold seems to have possessed men's minds to the destruction not only of common sense but of the most elementary instincts of self-preservation. It seems incredible now, that the first party of one hundred and eight settlers,<sup>1</sup> cut off from home by a voyage of many weeks, stranded on the edge of an unexplored continent with quite inadequate supplies, should have kept up this mood of fairy-tale optimism; yet the fact remains that they chose to wander about the country in search of gold instead of growing the crops on which their lives depended. And even if they had found gold, what use would it have been to them when they were without food?

They were fortunate enough to be rescued by Drake in the following year; but a garrison of fifteen men<sup>2</sup> left there soon afterwards were all massacred by the Indians, while the fate of the second band of colonists, (eighty-nine men, seventeen women and eleven children), sent out in 1587, who had all vanished when a relief ship reached their settlement three years later, became one of the mysteries of America. The ferocity of the Indians, and the fact that they were left without supplies for three years, suggest ample reasons for their disappearance, but with the romanticism which always seems to have accompanied the rough job of colonising America, many fruitless efforts were made to trace them or their descendants, and as late as the nineteenth century the rumour of an Indian tribe speaking Elizabethan English still had power to excite public interest.

While his colonists perished out of sight in Virginia, Raleigh was absorbed in the far more dramatic struggles of his glamorous but insecure career. The Spanish Armada kept him honourably employed during 1588; a fall from favour in the following year resulted in a holiday in Ireland where he completed his ten-thousand-line poem, *The Ocean's Love to Cynthia*, in praise of Queen Elizabeth<sup>3</sup>; while during the next four years political and personal intrigue involved him in an unsuccessful attempt to raise a revolution in Portugal against the Spaniards; a great privateering expedition against Spanish shipping in the Azores from which he was recalled in mid-ocean to deal with the problem of his marriage to one of the Queen's maids of honour; disgrace; and imprisonment in the Tower. When he once again turned his attention to America, it was not the rescue of his miserable colonists that he had in mind, but a grandiose scheme to restore his fame by the discovery of El Dorado.

<sup>1</sup> In 1585 they were landed on Roanoke under the command of Ralph Lane.

<sup>2</sup> The number of men has been disputed; it may have been fifty.

<sup>3</sup> His friend Edmund Spenser, whom he visited in his ruined castle in Ireland, thought highly of this poem. It was thought to have been entirely lost, until in 1870, Archdeacon Hannah published a long passage of it which he discovered in manuscript among other fragments of Raleigh's work.

*Sir Walter Raleigh ; The Discovery of the large, rich, and beautiful Empire of Guiana, with a Relation of the Great and Golden City of Manoa, which the Spaniards call El Dorado, and the Provinces of Emeria, Arroimaia, Amapaia, and other Countries, with their Rivers adjoining. (Pub. 1595.)*

The legend of El Dorado, of a fabulously wealthy kingdom somewhere in the unexplored interior of South America, had possessed the imagination of the Spaniards ever since their discovery of the rich treasurers of Peru half a century earlier. Numerous ghastly journeys had been undertaken, lives and money recklessly thrown away, in search of this illusory kingdom, which had been variously placed in north Peru or New Granada, south Peru, northern Bolivia, southern Brazil and the northern part of Patagonia. By the end of the sixteenth century it had been finally fixed in Guiana, a vaguely defined area covering the territory now known as Venezuela. Elaborate details had accrued to the legend : the capital of the kingdom was supposed to be a golden city called Manoa, built on the shores of a vast salt lake surrounded by mountains so full of precious stones that they glittered from afar off ; it was said to be ruled by a king who powdered his body with gold dust, and whose possessions were all made of gold and silver. According to Raleigh he had life-size golden models of everything that existed in his dominions—the animals, trees, birds and fishes ; in his palace there were even “heaps of billets of gold that seemed wood, marked out to burn.” “Yea and they say,” Raleigh continues, “the Ingas had a garden of pleasure in an island near Puna, where they went to recreate themselves, when they would take the air of the sea, which had all kinds of garden herbs, flowers and trees of gold and silver, an invention, and magnificence until then never seen.” The Italian renaissance taste for improving on nature with costly artificial contrivances had already reached England, and to an elegant courtier such as Raleigh no greater luxury could be imagined than to sit in a garden looking at gold and silver trees and flowers instead of real ones.

How much of this fantasy was really believed by Raleigh is uncertain, but it was enough to induce him to leave his ships at Trinidad, embark with a hundred men in open boats, and force his way up a tributary of the Orinoco into the unknown tropical jungle at a moment in his career when he could not afford a failure. This would have been a tough journey even for one of the hard-boiled Elizabethan adventurers ; but for Raleigh, a man no longer young, who had always lived sumptuously, who prided himself on his jewels and fine clothes, his cloaks trimmed with gilded lace and bands of pearls, who had crossed the Atlantic sleeping in a bed supported on gilded dolphins and hung with green curtains, it was, as he admits, a terrible ordeal :

" . . . for in the bottom of an old Gallego which I caused to be fashioned like a galley, and in one barge, two wherries, and a ship boat of the *Lyons Whelp*, we carried one hundred persons and their victuals for a month in the same, being all driven to lie in the rain and weather, in the open air, in the burning sun, and upon hard boards, and to dress our meat, and to carry all manner of furniture in them, wherewith they were so pestered and unsavoury, that what with the victuals being most fish, with the wet clothes of so many men thrust together and the heat of the sun, I will undertake there was never any prison in England, that could be found more unsavoury and loathsome, especially to myself, who had for many years before been dieted and cared for in a sort far differing."

He had little enough to encourage him. Many celebrated Spaniards had already poured away hopes, fortunes and lives in attempts to reach Guiana: "These," wrote Raleigh, summarising their failures, "were the ends and tragedies of Oreliano, Ordace, Martynes, and Agiri." When he kidnapped Berreo, the Spanish governor of Trinidad and one of the last to have engaged in the quest, hoping to obtain valuable information, he found him a muddled and disillusioned old man "not knowing the east from the west," who assured him that his scheme was hopeless, that the tributaries of the Orinoco were unnavigable and the Indians hostile. Nothing had come of all these disastrous journeys but a few gold ornaments purchased from the Indians; some plates "curiously wrought," some golden eagles and "images of birds and men," and some gourds filled with gold beads; these, and vague reports of lands rich in gold, a little further, always a little further back in the interior, were the only justification for Raleigh's hopes.

It was the force of an idea that really kept him going, the old mad fascinating idea of boundless wealth that for centuries had been focussed on the East, on the land of Prester John and the empire of Cathay, this old idea transferred to a new legend and concentrated in a single, superbly ambitious adventure. It was this that enabled him to prepare and carry out his crazy scheme with such practical good sense; to make laborious researches and patient inquiries, questioning "all aged men and such as were greatest travellers," until he had gained an extraordinarily accurate idea of the geography of the region; to conduct the journey so competently that instead of the sequence of nasty deaths usual in Elizabethan exploits not a single life was lost; to lure on his hungry grumbling men with promises of fame; and to carry out the "impatient work" of preventing "the meaner sort" from spoiling, raping and stealing, with the result that his relations with the Indians was uniformly friendly. Seldom can intelligence, will power and good organisation have been devoted to a more hopeless aim.



But Raleigh lived in a dream that no discouragement could shatter, which makes his account of this futile journey the most magical of all travel stories. The Spanish Indian names roll out with glorious sonority :—Emeria, Pampelone, Timana, Arroaia, Maracapon, Baraquan ; gnawing stomachs, roving cannibals, men " heart-broken, and tired " and " ready to give up the ghost," were small matters compared with the majesty of the forest, its variety of flowers and trees " sufficient to make ten volumes of herbals," and birds of all colours—carnation, crimson, orange tawny, purple, green and watchet. The stress of hardship is never apparent ; scene follows scene with dream-like serenity : in a night " dark as pitch " they struggle through a channel so narrow that they have to cut away the overhanging branches with their swords ; at one in the morning they see a light, and rowing towards it, hear the dogs of a native village. The next day they are gliding through beautiful open country, with " plains twenty miles in length, the grass short and green, and in divers parts groves of trees by themselves, as if they had been by all the art and labour in the world so made of purpose : and still as we rowed, the deer came down feeding by the water's side, as if they had been used to a keeper's call."

When they reached the Orinoco itself, and later, the junction of the Orinoco and great Caroni, the river on which El Dorado was said to be situated, the men, who had so often " despaired," became possessed by the same illusions. In their enthusiasm they dragged Raleigh, who hated walking, miles across country to view the magnificent falls of the Caroni ; the land appeared to them a paradise ; every stone had the glitter of wealth, and having omitted, as was usual in Elizabethan gold-seeking expeditions, to bring any of the necessary tools, they tore at the earth in frenzied eagerness with their daggers and naked hands.

" When we ran to the tops of the first hills of the plains adjoining to the river, we beheld that wonderful breach of water, which ran down Caroli<sup>1</sup> : and might from that mountain see the river how it ran in three parts, above twenty miles off, and there appeared some ten or twelve overfalls in sight, every one as high over the other as a church tower, which fell with that fury, that the rebound of waters made it seem, as if it had been all covered over with a great shower of rain : and in some places we took it at first for a smoke that had risen over some great town. For mine own part I was well persuaded from thence to have returned, being a very ill footman, but the rest were all so desirous to go near the said strange thunder of waters, as they drew me on little by little, till we came into the next valley, where we might better discern the same. I never saw a more beautiful country, nor more lively prospects, hills so raised here and there over the valleys, the river winding

<sup>1</sup> Caroli ; now Caroni.

into divers branches, the plains adjoining without bush or stubble, all fair green grass, the ground of hard sand easy to march on, either for horse or foot, the deer crossing in every path, the birds towards evening singing on every tree with a thousand different tunes, cranes and herons of white, crimson and carnation perching on the rivers side, the air fresh with a gentle easterly wind, and every stone that we stopped to take up, promised either gold or silver by his complexion. Your Lordship shall see many sorts, and I hope some of them cannot be bettered under the sun, and yet we had no means but with our daggers and fingers to tear them out here and there, the rocks being most hard of that mineral spar aforesaid."

They never found gold, or silver, or Manoa the golden city with its great salt lake and gilded king; they did not even reach any territory that could be defined as El Dorado. Yet there is no sense of disappointment in this part of the story; on the contrary, the illusion increases. There are rumours of mountains full of sapphires and crystals "growing diamond wise"; of headless Indians with eyes in their shoulders and mouths in their breasts; of gold nuggets in the lake of Manoa; of a land not so very far away inhabited by "rich and apparelled people" who used the inevitable gold plates made in the form of men and animals. When Raleigh confers secretly in his tent with an Indian king the meeting assumes the dignity of high diplomacy in European courts; local wars and alliances are discussed, plans for ousting the Spaniards and conquering El Dorado, which is still, however, just out of reach, somewhere further back in the interior. Mountains glitter with crystal and gold and silver, though always in the distance, always a little too far for Raleigh to walk to; in park-like valleys they rest by clear lakes full of delicious fish, and "the lords of the country" arrive as though by miracle to offer them "delicate wine." So they wandered like people in a dream, until the coming of the wet season, when their "hearts were cold to behold the great rage and increase of Orenoque," and they took to their boats and returned to the sea by another tributary.

"... when it grew towards sunset, we entered a branch of a river that fell into Orenoque called Winicapora, where I was informed of the mountain of crystal, to which in truth for the length of the way, and the evil season of the year, I was not able to march nor abide any longer upon the journey: we saw it afar off and it appeared like a white church tower of an exceeding height: There falleth over it a mighty river which toucheth no part of the side of the mountain, but rusheth over the top of it, and falleth to the ground with a terrible noise and clamour, as if 1000 great bells were knocked against one another. I think there is not in the world so strange an overfall,

nor so wonderful to behold : Berreo told me that it hath diamonds and other precious stones in it, and that they shined very far off ; but what it hath I know not, neither durst he or any of his men ascend to the top of the said mountain, those people adjoining being his enemies . . . and the way to it so impassible."

Raleigh had his reputation at stake ; success was at that moment absolutely necessary to him, and success in the Elizabethan age meant not, as now, doing as well as circumstances allow, but achieving a desired goal. According to these standards his expedition was a failure ; he had not discovered Manoa nor even any part of El Dorado, and he had found no evidence of gold except some white quartz that might possibly contain gold ore, some glittering mountains in the distance, and the usual native gossip about gold plates. He was therefore bound, in writing his book, to make the most of the noble scenery and the alluring rumours in order to present his exploit in the best possible light. Yet he could hardly have created so enchanted a picture had he not himself been living under a spell. Raleigh has been accused of deliberately deceiving the public ; it seems more likely that he deceived himself. His journey, and his account of it, illustrates the power of suggestion. Somewhere up the Orinoco was a land rich in gold—of that he was convinced, and this conviction enabled him to ignore physical hardships that he was particularly unsuited to bear, to regard a tough tropical journey as a magical romance, and not only to overlook the all-important fact that he had failed to reach El Dorado, but to write a resplendent advertisement for Guiana on the assumption that the golden kingdom was to be found there :

"The common soldier shall here fight for gold, and pay himself instead of pence, with plates of half a foot broad, whereas he breaketh his bones in other wars for provant<sup>1</sup> and penury. Those commanders and chieftains, that shoot at honour, and abundance, shall find there more rich and beautiful cities, more temples adorned with golden images, more sepulchres filled with treasure, than either Cortez found in Mexico, or Pazzaro in Peru : and the shining glory of this conquest will eclipse all those far extended beams of the Spanish nation. . . .

"To conclude, Guiana is a country that hath yet her maidenhead, never sacked, turned, nor wrought, the face of the earth hath not been torn, nor the virtue and salt of the soil spent by manurance, the graves have not been opened for gold, the mines not broken with sledges, nor their images pulled down out of their temples."

Was there ever a more alluring invitation to colonial enterprise ?  
". . . after the first or second year," he concludes, "I doubt not but

<sup>1</sup> provant : a wretched allowance of food.

to see in London a contratation house of more receipt for Guiana, than there is now in Seville for the West Indies."

Raleigh had meant to look for his colonists on the way home, but the weather, he writes, prevented him; the truth is he was bored with Virginia and had already sold his patent. It was not until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the enterprise had passed from private hands to a company, that a colony was permanently established.

In the April of 1607 an expedition of about a hundred and fifty men, financed by the newly-formed London Virginia Company, sailed into Chesapeake Bay. The Honourable George Percy, one of the numerous gentlemen of the party—the colony was badly handicapped from the beginning by the presence of "soft-handed" sons of noblemen and country squires—describes a first delight and immediate disillusionment which must have been typical.

*Observations gathered out of a Discourse of the Plantation of the Southern Colony in Virginia by the English 1606,<sup>1</sup> written by that Honourable gentleman, Master George Percy.<sup>2</sup>*

"The six and twentieth day of April about four o'clock in the morning, we descried the Land of Virginia.

"The same day, we entered into the Bay of Chesupioc directly, without any let or hindrance.

"There we landed and discovered a little way: but we could find nothing worth the speaking of, but fair meadows and goodly tall trees; with such fresh-waters running through the woods, as I was almost ravished at the first sight thereof.

"At night, when we were going aboard, there came the savages creeping upon all fours, from the hills, like bears; with their bows in their mouths: (who) charged us very desperately in the faces, hurt Captain Gabriel Archer in both his hands, and a sailor in two places of the body very dangerously. After they had spent their arrows, and felt the sharpness of our shot, they retired into the woods with a great noise, and so left us."

Clearly it was necessary to build the settlement in a spot easy to defend, and from which the whole colony could escape to their ships in an emergency. Consequently a peninsula in the James river was chosen, which was joined to the mainland by only a narrow neck, and

<sup>1</sup> The colonists had sailed from London in December 1606; they did not reach Virginia until April of the following year.

<sup>2</sup> Published in *Purchas his Pilgrimes*.



which dropped into water so deep that the ships could be anchored alongside. Unfortunately this site chosen for Jamestown was the worst possible place for fever.

But illness and the Indians were only a part of the troubles that tortured this first colony. It seems that nothing had been learnt from earlier failures. When the two big ships departed to England, the settlers were left with provisions for only fourteen weeks, the Virginia Company having assumed, as Raleigh had done before, that it was possible for a settlement to become self-supporting within a few months. This folly might be explained by the glowing accounts of Virginia that had already appeared, such as that of Amadas and Barlowe, which gives the impression that the settler had only to stretch out his hand to obtain a delicious feast of fruit, fish, fowl and game; but it was certainly criminal stupidity not to have provided enough skilled workmen. It is recorded in the *History of Virginia*, perhaps with some exaggeration, that during the first two crucial years the colony had only one carpenter, "three others that could do little, but desired to be learners," two blacksmiths, and two sailors. The rest were "libertines," down-and-outs "ten times more fit to spoil a common-wealth, than either begin one, or but to help to maintain one." Gentlemen, mostly impoverished or discredited, and their helpless servants and disreputable hangers-on—these were the men who were supposed to do the job of hacking, clearing, building, digging and planting. It is hardly surprising that within ten days after the ships had left most of them lay groaning on the open ground, or that more than half the colony died in the first eighteen months; indeed it seems a miracle, as it seemed to George Percy at the time, that the whole lot were not wiped out by the Indians;

"There were never Englishmen left in a foreign country in such misery as we were in this new discovered Virginia. We watched every three nights, lying on the bare cold ground, what weather soever came; (and) warded all the next day: which brought our men to be most feeble wretches. Our food was but a small can of barley sodden in water, to five men a day. Our drink, cold water taken out of the river; which was, at a flood, very salt; at a low tide, full of slime and filth: which was the destruction of many of our men.

"Thus we lived for the space of five months in this miserable distress, not having five able men to man our bulwarks upon any occasion. If it had not pleased God to have put a terror in the savages hearts, we had all perished by those wild and cruel pagans, being in that weak estate as we were; our men night and day groaning in every corner of the fort most pitiful to hear. If there were any conscience in men, it would make their hearts to bleed to hear the pitiful murmurings

and out-cries of our sick men without relief, every night and day, for the space of six weeks : some departing out of the world, many times three or four in a night ; in the morning, their bodies being trailed out of their cabins like dogs, to be buried."

But nobody's heart bled, nobody pitied, nobody had any conscience at all. A record of treachery, underhand scheming, jealous spite, maniacal greed and utter indifference to human suffering makes the *History of Virginia*, compiled by John Smith and a number of the first settlers, one of the most shocking documents in history. It seems that the majority of men concerned in the founding of the colony not only had no heroic qualities, but no qualities at all.

The smash-and-grab conduct of "the meaner sort"—a familiar theme in the travel literature of the period—is only to be expected ; but it is a shock to find that the gentlemen behaved no better. When the ships had left for England, and with them the tavern-amenities provided by the sailors, the colony almost at once began to starve. Meanwhile the President, Wingfield, with an abuse of privilege which was to become usual in Virginia, feasted on the more palatable of the meagre supplies, and when these were finished, the sick and dying settlers awoke to the fact that he was planning to desert them in the pinnace which had been left for the use of the colony.

*The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Islands : with the names of the Adventurers, Planters, and Governours from their first beginning An : 1584 to this present 1624. With the Proceedings of those Several Colonies and the Accidents that befell them in all their Journeys and Discoveries. Also the maps and descriptions of all those Contries, their Commodities, people, Government, Customes, and Religion yet known. Divided into sixe Bookes. By Captain John Smith<sup>1</sup> sometimes Governour in those Countryes and Admirall of New England. (Pub. 1624.)*

"Being thus left to our fortunes, it fortun'd that within ten days scarce ten amongst us could either go, or well stand, such extreme

<sup>1</sup> *John Smith* (1580-1631), the son of a Lincolnshire tenant farmer, at the age of sixteen he ran away to Europe and during the next ten years had fantastic adventures as a soldier of fortune. He killed three Turks in single combat, was rewarded by Sigismund Bathor, Duke of Transylvania, with a coat of arms, was taken prisoner, sold as a slave, and sent to Turkey, where he was for a time protected by a Turkish lady who loved him called Tragabigzanda. Years later, when exploring New England, he named a cape after her, which has unfortunately been renamed Cape Anne. He was only twenty-six when he went to Virginia. After his return in 1609 he took up the colonisation of the northern part of America with undamped enthusiasm. In 1614 he mapped the coast of the country which he named New England ; in 1619 he offered to pilot the Pilgrim Fathers but was refused.

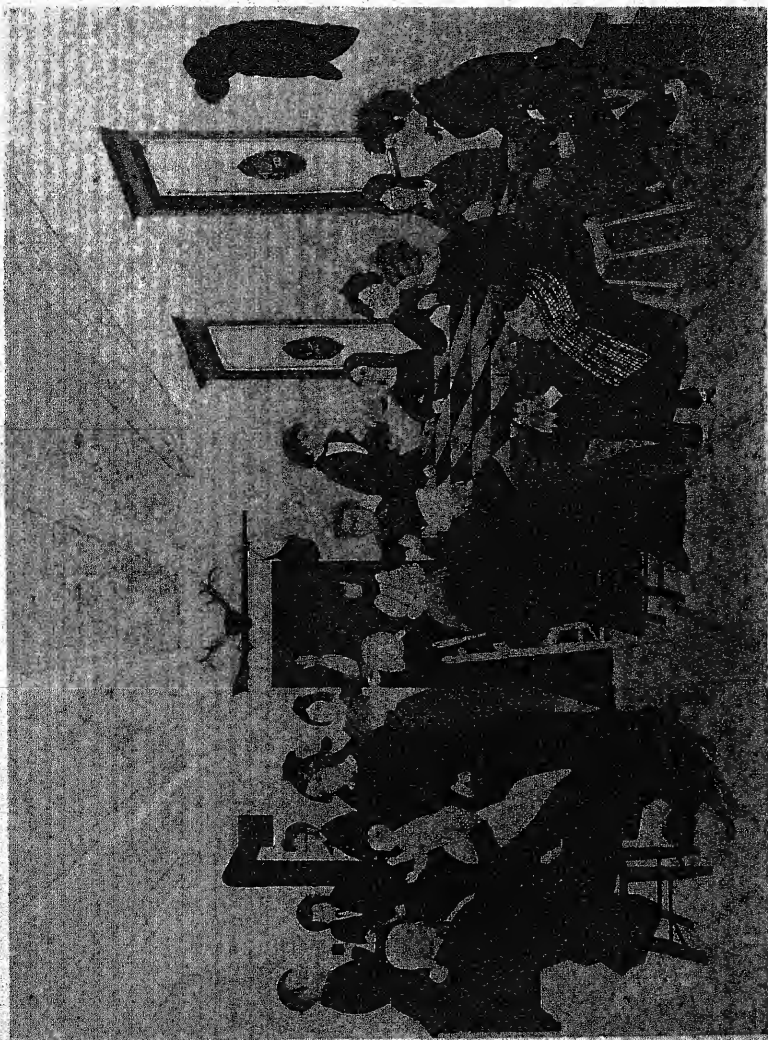
weakness and sickness oppressed us. And thereat none need marvel, if they consider the cause and reason, which was this.

"Whilst the ships stayed, our allowance was somewhat bettered, by a daily proportion of biscuit, which the sailors would pilfer to sell, give or exchange with us, for money, saxefras, furs, or love. But when they departed, there remained neither tavern, beer house, nor place of relief, but the common kettle. Had we been as free from all sins as gluttony, and drunkenness, we might have been canonised for saints; but our President would never have been admitted, for engrossing to his private oatmeal, sack, oil, aquavitæ, beef, eggs, or what not, but the kettle; that indeed he allowed equally to be distributed, and that was half a pint of wheat, and as much barley boiled with water for a man a day, and this having fried some twenty-six weeks in the ship's hold, contained as many worms as grains; so that we might truly call it so much bran than corn. Our drink was water, our lodgings castles in the air.

"With this lodging and diet, our extreme toil in bearing and planting pallisadoes, so strained and bruised us, and our continual labour in the extremity of heat had so weakened us, as were cause sufficient to have made us miserable in our native country, or any other place in the world.

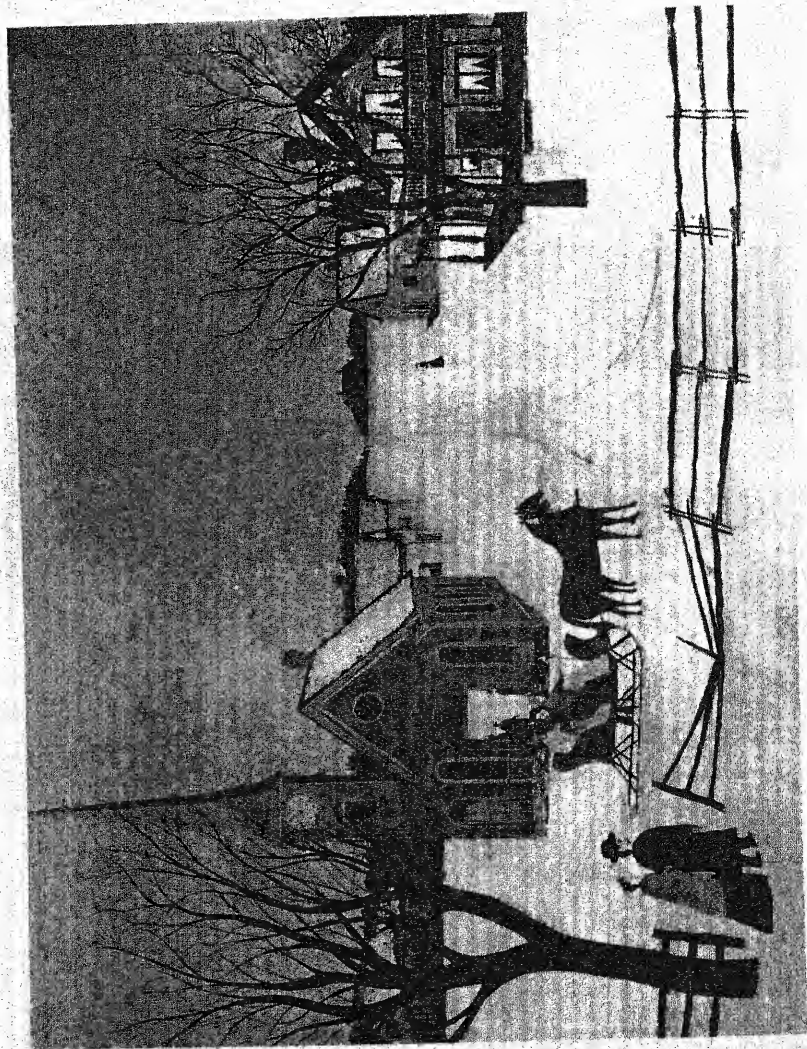
"From May to September, those that escaped, lived upon sturgeon, and sea-crabs, fifty in this time we buried, the rest seeing the President's projects to escape these miseries in our pinnace by flight (who all this time had neither felt want nor sickness) so moved our dead spirits, as we deposed him; and established Ratcliffe in his place." *Written by T. Studely, E. Harrington, R. Fenton, J. Smith. Edited by W. Simmonds.*

Loyalty, to individuals, to the colony, even to King and Country was hardly attempted. In bad times the gentlemen, the gallants and wits, or—as they were contemptuously referred to by the authors of the *History*—the "tuftaffatay humorists," were sure to try to bolt for home; more than once they were only prevented from putting out to sea in the pinnace by "sabre and musket shot," which forced them either "to stay or sink in the river." Others were caught communicating with the Spaniards, who would always pay well for information about the new English colonies; some actually went over to the Indians with plans to destroy the whole settlement. As for the President and Councillors, the governors of the colony, no matter what dangers beset them—famine, fever, betrayal or massacre by the Indians—their chief concern was with their own "disgustful brawls"; engaged in a bitter struggle for existence, they wore themselves out attacking one another. Charges of slander, corruption, murderous intentions—of any and



*The Quilting Party.*  
*From an American primitive painting 1840-50. Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York.*





Winter Sunday in Norway, Maine.  
*From an American primitive painting c. 1870. Collection of Lean Lipman.*

every type of misdemeanour—were trumped up for no better reason than that the influence or success of one of them was unendurable to the others. Captain Smith, a former soldier of fortune, who by force of character soon became leader of the colony, was perpetually subjected to these spiteful accusations.

The vicious individualism of his enemies was indeed suicidal. During the first two years it was Smith who kept the colony alive, for whenever famine threatened he ventured up the rivers into the interior to buy corn from the more or less hostile Indian tribes. His display of courage with sword and pistol, and his commanding, perhaps hypnotic personality, preserved him from innumerable ambushes and assaults,<sup>1</sup> and in spite of treacherous opposition he always somehow managed to extract the desperately needed supplies. Yet he seldom returned from one of these expeditions except to be greeted by the sight of the pinnace putting out to sea with some of his disgruntled associates, or some new plot against his position or his life. The attitude of the colonists is well summed in the words of the *Historie*: "Some so envied his good success, that they rather desired to hazard a starving, than his pains should prove so much more effectual than theirs."

Meanwhile the London Virginia Company, under the direction of such hard-boiled financiers as Sir Thomas Smith, regarded the colony as an investment which ought to yield immediate profits. From the beginning the wretched colonists were expected not only to support themselves, but to make a fortune for their backers. The ships that had brought them out from England had returned with a load of timber and sassafras; the first supply ships, which arrived some eight months later, brought equipment and skilled workers for procuring a cargo of gold. It is easy to understand the hilarious indignation with which the thirty-eight starving colonists—the only survivors of the one hundred and fifty who had originally left home—greeted this invasion of expert gold refiners:

"But the worst of all was our gilded refiners with their golden promises made all men their slaves in hope of recompenses; there was no talk, no hope, no work, but dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, load gold, such a bruit of gold, that one mad fellow desired to be buried in the sands lest they should by their art make gold of his bones: little need there was

<sup>1</sup> The well-known story of Pocahontas illustrates this power. Smith had been captured by the Indians and brought before the chief Powhatan; his head had been laid on the block, and the executioners were preparing to beat out his brains, when Powhatan's thirteen-year-old daughter Pocahontas rushed forward, and laying her head upon his, successfully appealed for his life. From what is known of Smith's personality and adventures it seems quite possible that this story is true. Pocahontas continued to befriend the English and later married one of the colonists, John Rolfe. She visited England with him, was received at court, and died as she was about to return to Virginia.

and less reason, the ship should stay, their wages run on, our victuals consume fourteen weeks." *Written by Anas Todkill.*

Greedy sailors and useless refiners ate up the insufficient stores intended for the colony, aided by rats that came ashore from the ships. Worse still, some of the newcomers "accidentally fired their quarters" in the town; the painfully erected palisades and thatched huts burnt to the ground, and with them, arms, bedding, clothes and food. It was mid-winter, and there was "an extreme frost"; with little left but the clothes on their backs the colonists had to start building Jamestown all over again.

The much longed for supply had brought nothing but misery and disappointment. It is true that a hundred men had been left as reinforcements, but most of them, including a jeweller, a perfumer, two refiners and two goldsmiths, were grotesquely unsuited to the work in hand and promptly became casualties. To complete the exasperation of the colonists, the new President, Ratcliffe, following the example of his predecessor, jeered at their sufferings by squandering stores and labour for his private pleasure. Dr. Russel and Anas Todkill, returning with Smith from an expedition into the interior, found Jamestown on the verge of revolt:

"There we found the Last Supply all sick; the rest, some lame, some bruised: all unable to do anything but complain of the pride and unreasonable needless cruelty of their silly President that had riotously consumed the store; and to fulfil his follies, about building him an unnecessary palace in the woods, had brought them all to that misery, that had we not arrived, they had as strangely tormented him with revenge."<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately Smith was able, as on many later occasions, to "appease their fury." A new President, Master Scrivener, was chosen, stores were rationed, labour diverted from the building of the unnecessary presidential palace to repairing the church and the storehouse, and somehow, in spite of almost unbearable hardships, the colony carried on through that winter and the following spring and summer. No doubt this was only because there was no alternative. Even if ships had been available it is improbable that the colonists would have voted for a mass return to England. Many were ruined men, who could expect nothing but trouble at home, nearly all dreaded the dangers of the Atlantic even more than the privations of Virginia. Crossing the Atlantic was then, and for a long time to come, a terrifying adventure: ships were

<sup>1</sup> From: "*The Proceedings of the English Colony in Virginia, taken faithfully out of the writings of Thomas Studly, Cape-marchant, Anas Todkil, Doctor Russell, Nathaniel Powell, William Phetiplace, and Richard Pots, with the labours of other discreet observers, during their residences.*" A document similar to the *Generall Historie of Virginia*, but shorter, compiled by Richard Pots and revised by the Rev. William Simmonds. It was published in 1612 as the second part of *A Map of Virginia*, a short descriptive work by Captain Smith.

sunk in hurricanes, lost in fogs, wrecked on savage islands or uncharted reefs and shoals ; attacks from enemy shipping, or from mere pirates, were always to be expected, with the possibility of murder, capture and imprisonment ; even without such accidents men died like flies from scurvy, dysentery and infectious diseases during the many weeks' sailing through the tropics. Necessity made the civilisation of America. The first settlers were trapped ; with the terrible Atlantic behind them, with starvation in their midst, they had no choice but to build, to plant, to produce, however unwillingly, however unskilfully. They were cut off from their past, and their present was intolerable ; in consequence, they were forced to live for the future or not live at all. From this necessity was evolved the forward-looking, go-ahead tradition which has made the greatness of America.

In spite of the setbacks caused by the first supply ship, the colonists pulled themselves together, and when the second supply arrived in the following autumn only thirty-eight of them had died. But this time the Virginia Company was to impose even worse handicaps. The backers announced, in a menacing letter to Smith, who had by then become President, that they were tired of being fed "but with ifs and ands, hopes and some few proofs" ; it was time for the colony to justify itself. Definite instructions were sent, which were no less than to discover a passage to the South Sea—the Pacific, find Raleigh's missing colonists, crown the Indian chief Powhatan, and start manufacturing. The ships were to be loaded with cargoes of pitch, tar, glass, soap ashes and clapboard ; if, so the letter continued, these cargoes failed to defray the expenses of sending the supply, the colonists were "like to remain banished men." In fact, under the threat of being abandoned to their own resources, they were ordered to scatter on wild exploring ventures, and to start manufacturing, when they were not yet out of the hunger stage.

At the time when the ships arrived they should have been busy buying corn from the Indians, their own meagre harvest being quite insufficient for the coming winter, and the supply ship, as usual, not having brought anything like enough ; instead, they had to risk another famine while making half-hearted attempts to carry out these mad instructions. Ridiculous expeditions were made in search of Raleigh's settlers, the South Sea, and, incidentally, gold ; Powhatan was crowned, and thereby encouraged to take a high hand with the colonists at a moment when they depended on him for food. Meanwhile Smith cajoled some of his "soft-handed gentlemen" into making a little clapboard with which to satisfy the rapacious business men at home :

"But thirty of us he conducted down the river some five miles from Jamestown, to learn to make clapboard, cut down trees, and



lie in woods. Amongst the rest he had chosen Gabriel Beadle, and John Russell, the only two gallants of this last supply, and both proper gentlemen. Strange were these pleasure to their conditions; yet lodging, eating, and drinking, working or playing, they but doing as the President did himself. All these things were carried so pleasantly as within a week they became masters; making it their delight to hear the trees thunder as they fell; but the axes so oft blistered their tender fingers, that many times every third blow had a loud oath to drown the echo; for remedy of which sin, the President devised how to have every man's oaths numbered, and at night for every oath to have a can of water poured down his sleeve, with which every offender was so washed (himself and all) that a man should scarce hear an oath for a week." *Written by R. Wiffin, J. Abbott, W. Phittiplace, A. Todkill. Edited by W. Simmonds.*

No wonder Smith wrote back to the Virginia Company:

"When you send again I entreat you rather send but thirty carpenters, husbandmen, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, masons, and diggers up of trees, roots, well provided; than a thousand such as we have; . . .

For in overtoiling our weak and unskilful bodies, to satisfy this desire of present profit, we can scarce ever recover ourselves from one supply to another."

As usual, the sailors made trouble. It was perhaps inevitable that they should have turned the ship into "our old tavern," and maintained "their damnable and private trade"—a kind of black market which depleted the resources of the colonists—but it was unnecessarily callous of them to have stolen their tools, their precious axes, chisels and hoes, to use for bartering with the Indians. But then nearly everyone concerned in the early history of Virginia behaved callously: the backers, the councillors, the gentlemen and the "meaner sort"; the heartlessness of the period, which seems attractive in such dilettanti as George Sandys and Evelyn, becomes disgusting in the founders of a colony. Inhumanity was a characteristic of the seventeenth century which went with a tireless curiosity, a thirst for knowledge, and a sense of visual beauty uncorrupted by sentiment; it also showed itself in the slave trade, imperialism, exploitation, and a barbarous disregard for human suffering.

Time and food had been wasted by the second supply; but once again Smith procured corn for the winter, though at the cost of dangerous skirmishes with the Indians who had become increasingly truculent since the coronation of Powhatan. During the next ten months he managed, by his firm and bold administration, to keep the colonists in some sort of order, and if not well fed, at least free from the danger

of starving. Under his orders they were made to "bestir themselves" to procure the food that the country provided—wild fruits and berries, and fish, including a great quantity of sturgeon; and although, as usual, most of them evaded work, and "one hundred and fifty were fed by the pains of forty," they were at least fed. Later, when supplies ran short, some were billeted on the more friendly of the neighbouring Indians. By such measures he succeeded in bringing the colony through with only six or seven deaths until the following summer, when a reinforcement of over three hundred arrived, the survivors of five hundred who had left England in the third supply<sup>1</sup>.

But his competence was more than his rivals could endure. One day in September 1609, returning down the river from one of his up-country expeditions, his powder bag accidentally caught fire. Smith saved his life by jumping overboard, but he almost drowned, his thighs were badly burnt, and he was carried back to Jamestown in the greatest pain. This was too good a chance to miss, and his enemies at once decided to murder him while he lay helpless in his bed. But the hypnotic power that had many times preserved him from the Indians again came to his rescue; unaccountably, the men who had entered his cabin to shoot him lost the power to act, in the words of the *Historie*: "his heart did fail him that should have given fire to that merciless pistol." Instead, Smith was sent home "to answer some misdameanours," with a long list of charges and several witnesses against him. But after all, he was treated no worse than Columbus, who had been shipped back from America in irons.

As soon as he had gone the colony went to bits. He had left nearly five hundred people, provided with about sixty houses, ships and boats, and a good stock of horses, pigs, chickens, goats and tools. Within six months less than a hundred were left, and the Reverend Simmonds thought it a great joke that they survived on tasty dishes made from one another:

"Now we all felt the loss of Captain Smith, yea his greatest maligners could now curse his loss: as for corn provision and contribution from the savages, we had nothing but mortal wounds, with clubs and arrows; as for our hogs, hens, goats, sheep, horse, or what lived, our commanders, officers and savages daily consumed them, some small proportions sometimes we tasted, till all was devoured; then swords, arms, pieces, or anything, we traded with the savages, whose cruel fingers were so oft embrewed with our bloods, that what

<sup>1</sup> Nine ships had left England carrying five hundred people, including women and children. One small ship was lost at sea, while the flag-ship, the *Sea Venture*, carrying Sir George Somers, Sir Thomas Gates and Captain Newport, who had decided to travel together because they could not agree as to which of them should have supreme command of the expedition, failed to arrive. It was thought that the ship had sunk in a storm, but actually it had been wrecked on the uninhabited island of Bermuda, and the passengers eventually reached Virginia.

by their cruelty, our Governor's indiscretion, and the loss of our ships, of five hundred within six months after Captain Smith's departure, there remained not past sixty men, women and children, most miserable and poor creatures; and those were preserved for the most part, by roots, herbs, acorns, walnuts, berries now and then a little fish: . . . yea, even the very skins of our horses.

"Nay, so great was our famine, that a savage we slew and buried, the poorer sort took him up again and ate him, and so did divers one another boiled and stewed with roots and herbs: and one amongst the rest did kill his wife, powdered her,<sup>1</sup> and had eaten part of her before it was known; for which he was executed, as he well deserved: now whether she was better roasted, boiled, or carbonado'd<sup>2</sup> I know not; but of such a dish as powdered wife I never heard of." *Written by the Reverend W. Simmonds. Edited by J. Smith.*

It was by accident that the colony survived. In the following May the derelict inhabitants were amazed by the arrival of Sir George Somers, Sir Thomas Gates and a shipload of people thought to have perished at sea with the third supply. In fact they had managed to reach the uninhabited island of Bermuda, where they had maintained themselves ten months and built the two ships in which they had sailed to Virginia. The sight of the sixty remaining colonists was enough to convince Somers and Gates that this was no place to settle, and it was thereupon decided that Virginia should be abandoned and the colony transferred to Newfoundland. But just as the combined parties were sailing out of the river, by a dramatic coincidence, they encountered three ships arriving from England—a new and well-furnished supply commanded by Lord de la Warr. After some discussion, Lord de la Warr persuaded them to go back, and the colony of Virginia was begun all over again.

This time, drastic measures were resorted to. Order was brutally enforced by Dutch martial law, administered according to a book sent out by the Virginia Company. Religion also played a part in imposing discipline, everyone being forced to go to church regularly under the threat of fine and punishment, while such puritanical regulations as the taxing of showy clothes checked frivolity in private life. As before, the colony suffered disastrous accidents: plague, brought from England, and a terrible massacre by the Indians; once a supply of bad beer caused the death of more than two hundred colonists. But somehow the colony survived this and much else; such unsettling events, for instance, as the arrival of a hundred boys and girls picked up starving from the streets of London whom the company thought fit to dump in Virginia, or of the various shiploads of "young and uncorrupt maids,"

<sup>1</sup> Powdered: salted. <sup>2</sup> Carbonadoed: broiled or grilled.

each bearing a testimonial of virtue, who were sent to relieve the woman shortage. Each of these girls was to be purchased from the Company as a wife; the price was one hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco, or eighteen pounds; the financiers of this scheme were known as "the adventurers for the magazine of the maids." At the same period the colonists took to buying negro slaves from Dutch merchants.<sup>1</sup> With the coming of women and slaves the colony began to get through enough work to keep itself, and gradually Virginia became, if not the land of golden wealth envisaged by the Elizabethans, at least a self-supporting agricultural community.

The New England colonies,<sup>2</sup> which began with the arrival of the *Mayflower* in 1620, never went through the boiled wife phase. The rigidly fanatical Pilgrim Fathers, and the various Puritan sectarians who followed them, if not more tender hearted than Smith's colonists, were at least free from the arrogant fecklessness that almost wrecked Virginia. To labour hard at a calling was part of the Puritan code; the movement, which had strong support in the middle classes, had no appeal to gallants, tavern-wasters, or the "tuftaffaty" type of gentleman. Among the early New England colonists there were always plenty of useful "handicraftsmen" and "husbandmen," and the discipline of church-going, plain living and plain dressing, the value of which was not realised in Virginia until almost too late, was enforced from the beginning. Inevitably "broils" and "riots" disturbed these struggling settlements; on one occasion Master K., a minister, marched against his rival, Master Larkham, another minister, at the head of a troop of men, carrying "a Bible upon a pole's top, and he, or some of his party giving forth, that their side were Scots, and the other English."<sup>3</sup> But these outbreaks, and minor offences such as drunkenness, were immoderately punished by fines, whipping, or torture, so that the settlers were at least discouraged from openly disorderly behaviour.

John Josselyn<sup>4</sup>; *An Account of Two Voyages to New England*. 1638 & 1663.

John Josselyn, who visited New England in 1638, when Boston

<sup>1</sup> From 1620.

<sup>2</sup> The name New England was originally given by Smith to that part of the coast which he explored and mapped on his 1614 expedition between the forty-first and forty-fifth degrees of North Latitude. The Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower* landed at Plymouth in Massachusetts Bay.

<sup>3</sup> *Plain Dealing, or News from New-England*. By Thomas Lechford; published 1642.

<sup>4</sup> John Josselyn was the second son of Sir Thomas Josselyn, knight, of Essex. His elder brother, Henry, settled in Maine in 1634; became member of the



was a village of twenty or thirty houses, that is to say, smaller than Jamestown when Captain Smith left Virginia, saw no sign of lawlessness or privation. On the other hand he observed, with apparent equanimity, much cruelty, repression, crude superstition and coarseness. The coarseness described in such a matter-of-fact way in his accounts of both his journeys is the more remarkable when it is remembered that Josselyn was no tough adventurer, but a man of position and breeding, visiting for pleasure a brother who held high positions in the colony of Maine. On reaching Boston in 1638 the first thing he did was to pay his respects to Mr. Winthrop, the governor; he then called on Mr. Cotton, teacher of Boston Church, and presented him with the latest works of Francis Quarles—some psalms translated into "English metre"—which the poet had entrusted him to deliver. Obviously Josselyn moved in the best New England society; it is therefore startling to read of the brutalities he encountered, and the indifference with which he regarded them.

But then Josselyn belonged to an age in which callousness was the rule, even among the most civilised. A typical cultured gentleman of the seventeenth century, he was at once imaginative, inquisitive, and hard-boiled, combining his tastes for poetry, exotic marvels, and natural history, with an appetite for pioneering enterprise. He had also the seventeenth-century love of words, and when moved by his subject could write in a rich resounding manner reminiscent of George Sandys, as in his introduction to his second voyage:

"I have heard of a certain merchant in the west of England, who after many great losses, walking upon the sea-bank in a calm sun-shining day; observed the smoothness of the sea, coming in with a chequered or dimpled wave: 'Ah (quoth he), thou flattering element, many a time thou hast enticed me to throw myself and my fortunes into thy arms; but thou has hitherto proved treacherous; . . .'"

The merchant, however, decides to go to sea again.

"So fared it with me, that having escaped the dangers of one voyage, must needs put on a resolution for a second, wherein I plowed many a churlish billow with little or no advantage, but rather to my loss and detriment. . . ."

He then defends his story against possible critics:

"There be a sort of stagnant stinking spirits, who, like flies, lie sucking

Maine government, deputy-governor of Maine in 1645, and Commissioner for the administration of the government in 1665. John Josselyn visited his brother at Scarborough, Maine, in 1638, and again in 1663, when he stayed eight and a half years. His *New England's Rarities discovered in birds, beasts, fishes, serpents and plants of that country* was published in London in 1672. His *Two Voyages* was published in 1674; unfortunately it gives few personal details about his stay in America.

at the botches of carnal pleasures, and never travelled so much sea, as is between Hethferry and Lyon-Key ; yet not withstanding (sitting in the chair of the scornful over their whiffs and draughts of intoxication), will desperately censure the relations of the greatest travellers . . . . Of fools and mad-men then I shall take no care, I will not invite these in the least to honour me with a glance from their supercilious eyes ; but rather advise them to keep their inspection for their fine-tongued Romances, and plays."

Only those, who like Josselyn and the west of England merchant, were almost perversely fascinated by the sea, would choose to make long voyages at that period. The Atlantic crossing, even by the comparatively healthy northern route, even when shipwrecks and pirates were avoided, was liable to provide a variety of frightful and sinister experiences. On Josselyn's first voyage to New England smallpox broke out while the ship was still lying off Dover ; a number of passengers died of it before reaching America, while others who had escaped the infection died of "consumptions" and "the phthisick." Recalling Whitsunday, Josselyn coolly observes :

"The twelfth day being Whitsunday, at prayer-time we found . . . the party that was sick of the small-pox now died, whom we buried in the sea, tying a bullet (as the manner is) to his neck, and another to his legs, turned him out at a port-hole, giving fire to a great gun. In the afternoon one Martin Ivy, a stripling, servant to Captain Thomas Cammock, was whipped naked at the capstan, with a cat of nine tails, for filching nine great lemons out of the *chirurgeons* cabin, which he ate rinds and all in less than an hour's time."

One night a flame, "about the bigness of a large candle," settled on the main-mast ; it was the dreaded St. Elmo's Fire, a spirit that presaged storm. Rain, thunder and lightning ensued ; a "very great grown sea" and "mighty winds" ; the main-mast was "twisted and shivered" ; at two in the morning seven new long boat oars broke away "with a horrid crack." Fog followed storm ; in a thick mist they sailed past "an enchanted island," a few days later past "an island of ice : with bays and capes and high cliffed land, and a river pouring off it into the sea." They also saw, according to Josselyn, "two or three foxes, or devils, skipping upon it."

Nor in America was there to be any escape from violences and abnormalities of nature :

"The nine and twentieth day, sounded at night, and found one hundred and twenty fathom of water, the head of the ship struck against a rock ; at four of the clock we descried two sails bound for Newfoundland, and so for the straits, they told us of a general earth-quake in

New England, of the birth of a monster at Boston, in the Massachusetts Bay a mortality, and now we are two leagues off Cape Anne."

The New World was elemental, fearful and cataclysmic, dwarfing the European intruders who huddled in their bleak little settlements along its shore. In page after page of ringing prose Josselyn records the wonders of nature; the colonists seemed to him so insignificant as to merit no more than an occasional paragraph. There were tempests and "impetuous" winds, hurricanes and "resounding" seas, mists that came down from the hills or descended from the heavens. The land was a "mere wilderness" of rocks and stately mountains; "ample rich and pregnant valleys," where the grass stood "man-high, unmowed and uselessly withering."<sup>1</sup> In the rivers and lakes were "an infinite of fish," in the forests trees "such as are called in Scripture Trees of God, that is great trees, that grow of themselves without planting. . . . The herons take great delight to sit basking on the tops of these trees."

Here anything might happen; one earthquake swallowed up a river; another rent "a huge rock asunder, wherein was a vast hollow of immeasurable depth, out of which came many infernal spirits." The colonists lived warily, oppressed by supernatural powers; spirits and monsters were part of their everyday experience. Josselyn saw America as a haunted and horrifying land, a conception, which, curiously enough, reappears in the stories of the nineteenth-century American writer Ambrose Bierce.

Visiting a friend at Black Point, Maine, the conversation was all of abnormal experiences:

"June the six and twentieth day, very stormy, lightning and thunder. I heard now two of the greatest and fearfulest thunder claps that ever were heard, I am confident. At this time we had some neighbouring gentlemen in our house, who came to welcome me into the country; . . .

"One Mr. Mittin related of a triton or merman which he saw in Casco-bay, the gentleman was a great fowler, and used to go out with a small boat or canoe, and fetching a compass about a small island, . . . for the advantage of a shot, was encountered with a triton, who laying his hands upon the side of the canoe, had one of them chopped off with a hatchet by Mr. Mittin, which was in all respects like the hand of a man, the triton presently sunk, dyeing the water with his purple blood, and was no more seen. The next story was told by Mr. Foxwell, now living in the province of Main, who having been

<sup>1</sup> This phrase seems to be a reminiscence of George Sandys' *Relation of a Journey*; Sandys describes the Arabs as those who "till no more than will serve to feed them; the grass waist high, unmowed, uneaten, and uselessly withering." Josselyn's prose frequently shows the influence of this book.

to the eastward in a shallop, as far as Cape Anne, . . . in his return was overtaken by the night, and fearing to land upon the barbarous shore, he put off a little further to sea; about midnight they were wakened with a loud voice from the shore, calling upon Foxwell, Foxwell come a shore, two or three times: upon the sands they saw a great fire, and men and women hand in hand dancing round about it in a ring, after an hour or two they vanished, and as soon as the day appeared, Foxwell puts into a small cove, it being about three quarters flood, and traces along the shore, where he found the footing of men, women and children shod with shoes; and in infinite number of brand-ends thrown up by the water, but neither Indian nor English could he meet with on the shore, nor in the woods; these and many other stories they told me, the credit whereof I will neither impeach nor enforce, but shall satisfy myself, and I hope the reader hereof, with the saying of a wise, learned and honourable knight, *that there are many stranger things in the world, than are to be seen between London and Staines.*"

There certainly were. One day he was told the story of a sow in Virginia that brought forth six pigs; their fore-parts lions, their hinder-parts hogs, which led him to reflect that "a sodomical monster is more like the mother than the father in the organs of the vegetative soul"; on another occasion he met a man who claimed to have seen the human monster of which he had heard while he was still at sea:

. . . "the next day a grave and sober person described the monster to me, that was born at Boston of one Mrs. Dyer a great sectarie, the nine and twentieth of June, it was (it should seem) without a head, but having horns like a beast, and ears, scales on a rough skin like a fish called a thornback, legs and claws like a hawk, and in other respects as a woman child."

Living on such close terms with the supernatural, many people sided with the spirits:

"There are none that beg in the country, but there be witches too many, bottle-bellied witches amongst the Quakers, and others that produce many strange apparitions if you will believe report, of a shallop at sea manned with women; of a ship, and a great red horse standing by the mainmast."

Trials for witchcraft, for "amazing feats" and "diabolical operations," were frequent, and usually led to the gallows. No doubt it was only because of this harsh and vigilant discipline that the colony survived. Any aberration from sober behaviour was a danger, when all energies were needed for the task of making a living out of a barbarous continent. The puritanical laws of New England were designed to keep the colonists at work; it was prudent that not only occultism, but drunkenness, late



hours, and even swearing should be strictly prohibited and mercilessly punished. When Josselyn first went to Boston there were "two houses of entertainment, called ordinaries," in the town: "into which if a stranger went, he was presently followed by one appointed for that office, who would thrust himself into his company uninvited, and if he called for more drink than the officer thought in his judgment he could soberly bear away, he would presently countermand it, and appoint the proportion, beyond which he could not get one drop."

When Josselyn revisited Boston in 1663, then a considerable and thriving town, there was a nine o'clock curfew, after which time police patrolled the streets "to take up loose people." It was a bad business for anyone who fell into their hands: "for being drunk, they either whip or impose a fine of five shillings; so for swearing and cursing, or boring through the tongue with a hot iron."

The Bostonians were practical and successful colonists; they had no time for being humane. While he was staying with a certain Mr. Mavrick, Josselyn heard a negro woman wailing outside his window. His host readily told him the reason:

"Mr. Mavrick was desirous to have a breed of negroes, and therefore seeing she would not yield by persuasions to company with a negro young man he had in his house; he commanded him will'd she nill'd she to go to bed with her, which was no sooner done but she kick't him out again, this she took in high disdain beyond her slavery, and this was the cause of her grief."

But New England, with its repressions and cruelties, was at least prosperous, and free from the anarchy that broke loose where men were less brutally controlled. In Newfoundland, for instance, the fishermen, on returning to port, would barter away their whole catch to merchants bringing strong drink from the Indies, and nothing would induce them to go to sea again until they had exhausted themselves in an orgy of intoxication:

"If a man of quality chance to come where they are roistering and gulling in wine with dear felicity, he must be sociable and roly-poly with them, taking off their liberal cups as freely, or else be gone, which is best for him, for when wine in their guts is at full tide, they quarrel, fight and do one another mischief, which is the conclusion of their drunken computations."

Out of the hunger, privation, brutality and fanaticism of the early colonies, American civilisation developed in a surprisingly short time. In the eighteenth century there were thirteen colonies ranged along the coast of that great area between Florida and Newfoundland which England had originally claimed. Well-built towns and villages

had superseded the early ramshackle settlements, the busy ports were full of prosperous merchants ; everywhere food was plentiful, and some of the big plantation owners, particularly in the south, lived in considerable grandeur.

Yet to anyone brought up amid the suave amenities of upper-class life in eighteenth-century Britain, America seemed depressing enough. Janet Schaw,<sup>1</sup> the enterprising Scots "Lady of Quality," visiting America just before the outbreak of the War of Independence, was horrified by the meagreness of the towns, the boorishness of the inhabitants, and the forbidding aspect of untamed nature.

*Janet Schaw ; Journal of a Lady of Quality ; Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the years 1774 to 1776.*

Having completed a round of visits in the West Indies, Janet Schaw continued her journey to North Carolina, where she was to stay with other friends and relations. Her first sight of America appalled her, although it was of the country around Cape Fear, not very far from that part of the coast which had delighted the eyes of Amadas and Barlowe and raised such misleading hopes of an earthly paradise in the minds of the early English colonists.

"At last America is in my view ; a dreary waste of white barren sand, and melancholy, nodding pines. In the course of many miles, no cheerful cottage has blest my eyes. All seems dreary, savage and desert ; and was it for this that such sums of money, such streams of British blood have been lavished away ? Oh, thou dear land, how dearly hast thou purchased this habitation for bears and wolves. Dearly has it been purchased, and at a price far dearer still it will be kept. My heart dies within me, while I view it."

On closer acquaintance the forests proved less barren and dreary than she had anticipated ; like nearly all British travellers, Janet Schaw could not help admiring the opulence of the American landscape. The country seemed to her "noble," everything was "on a large scale," the blossom of the wild fruits made "a fine effect" amid "the solemn gravity" of the forest trees, and "nothing could be finer" than the Cape Fear river : "a thousand beauties of the flowery and sylvan tribe hang over it and are reflected from it with additional lustre." But all this, she felt, could have been so much improved but for what she conceived to be the "indolence" of the inhabitants, who entirely

<sup>1</sup> See West Africa and the West Indies.

neglected such matters as fencing, hedging, and the cultivation of fruit and flowers. Accustomed to the tidy agriculture of the Old World, she could not appreciate the difficulties of wrenching a living from the primitive forests: the colonists, still somewhat weighed down by their struggle with nature, appeared to her lazy and degenerate.

... "but tho' I may say what I formerly did of the West India Islands, that nature holds out to them everything that can contribute to conveniency, or tempt to luxury, yet the inhabitants resist both, and if they can raise as much corn and pork, as to subsist them in the most slovenly manner, they ask no more; and as a very small proportion of their time serves for that purpose, the rest is spent in sauntering thro' the woods with a gun or sitting under a rustic shade, drinking New England rum made into grog, the most shocking liquor you can imagine. By this manner of living, their blood is spoil'd and rendered thin beyond all proportion, so that it is constantly on the fret like bad small beer, and hence the constant slow fevers that wear down their constitutions, relax their nerves and enfeeble the whole frame. Their appearance is in every respect the reverse of that which gives the idea of strength and vigour, and for which the British peasantry are so remarkable. They are tall and lean, with short waists and long limbs, sallow complexions and languid eyes, when not inflamed by spirits. Their feet are flat, their joints loose and their walk uneven. These I speak of are only the peasantry of this country, as hitherto I have seen nothing else, but I make no doubt when I come to see the better sort, they will be far from this description. For tho' there is a most disgusting equality, yet I hope to find an American gentleman a very different creature from an American clown. Heaven forefend else."

The American gentlemen, however, pleased her no better. Janet Schaw was one of the first of those cultured visitors who, judging America by the standards of contemporary life in Britain, and ignoring all the problems of pioneering, pronounced a sweeping condemnation of American manners and society. But unlike many later critics, this hardy eighteenth-century lady, who had nothing genteel in her make-up, at least had the wit to laugh at her own discomfiture, as when describing her first visit to the town of Wilmington:

"I have been in town a few days, and have had opportunity to make some little observations on the manners of a people so new to me. The ball I mentioned was intended as a civility, therefore I will not criticise it, and tho' I have not the same reason to spare the company, yet I will not fatigue you with a description, which however lively or just, would at best resemble a Dutch picture, where the injudicious choice of subject destroys the merit of the painting. Let it suffice

to say that a ball we had, where were dresses, dancing and ceremonies laughable enough, but there was no object on which my own ridicule fixed equal to myself and the figure I made, dressed out in all my British airs with a high head and a hoop trudging through the unpaved streets in embroidered shoes by the light of a lanthorn carried by a black wench half naked. No chair, no carriage—good leather shoes need none. The ridicule was the silk shoes in such a place. I have however gained some most amiable and agreeable acquaintances amongst the ladies ; many of whom would make a figure in any part of the world, and I will not fail to cultivate their esteem, as theirs appear worthy of mine.

"I am sorry to say, however, that I have met with few of the men who are natives of the country, who rise much above my former description, and as their natural ferocity is now inflamed by the fury of an ignorant zeal, they are of that sort of figure, that I cannot look at them without connecting the idea of tar and feather."

For these "natives," these apparently shiftless peasants, were actually an energetic, self-opinionated people, exasperated past bearing by British domination, British taxes, and British superiority. Janet Schaw had arrived at the very moment of the outbreak of the War of Independence. Of course she was an aggressive loyalist, convinced that the rebels ought to be liquidated without delay ; indeed it did not occur to her that a sane person could hold any other view. Governor Martin, she complained, was a "worthy" man, but "gentle methods will not do with these rustics, and he has not the power to use more spirited means." Meanwhile Mr. Dry, the collector of customs, talked "treason by the hour" ; the ladies, in emulation of the Boston tea party, had "burnt their tea in solemn procession" ; many of the merchants were preparing to fly the country. A grotesque situation had developed at New Bern, where the Governor resided : the members of the legal assembly, which sat under his authority, had formed themselves into an illegal assembly, defying both his power and that of the King. These two assemblies, composed of the same men, met daily in the same hall, to the consternation of this amiable Governor Martin. Then, just as Janet Schaw had accepted an invitation to stay with him to celebrate the King's birthday, news came that his house had been attacked, and that he and his family had been forced to seek refuge on a battleship.

The drilling of the rebel militia now began. In Wilmington, Janet Schaw watched a review which seemed to her both contemptible and alarming :

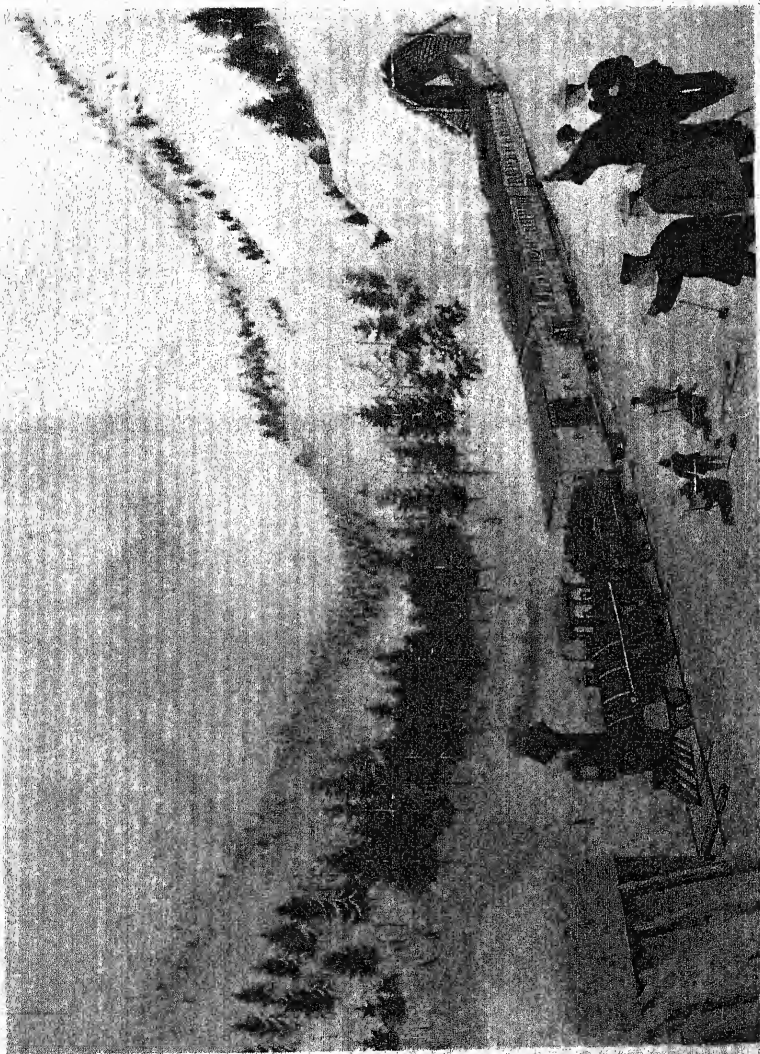
"Good heavens ! what a scene this town is ; surely you folks at home have adopted the old maxim of King Charles ; 'Make friends of your foes, leave friends to shift for themselves.'"



"We came down in the morning in time for the review, which the heat made as terrible to the spectators as to the soldiers, or what you please to call them. Their exercise was that of bush fighting, but it appeared so confused and so perfectly different from anything I ever saw, I cannot say whether they performed it well or not; but this I know that they were heated with rum till capable of committing the most shocking outrages. We stood in the balcony of Doctor Cobham's house and they were reviewed on a field mostly covered with what are called here scrubby oaks, which are only a little better than brushwood. They at last however assembled on the plain field, and I must really laugh when I recollect their figures: two thousand men in their shirts and trousers, preceded by a very ill-beat drum and a fiddler, who was also in his shirt with a long sword and a cue in his hair, who played with all his might. They made indeed a most unmartial appearance. But the worst figure there can shoot from behind a bush and kill even a General Wolfe.

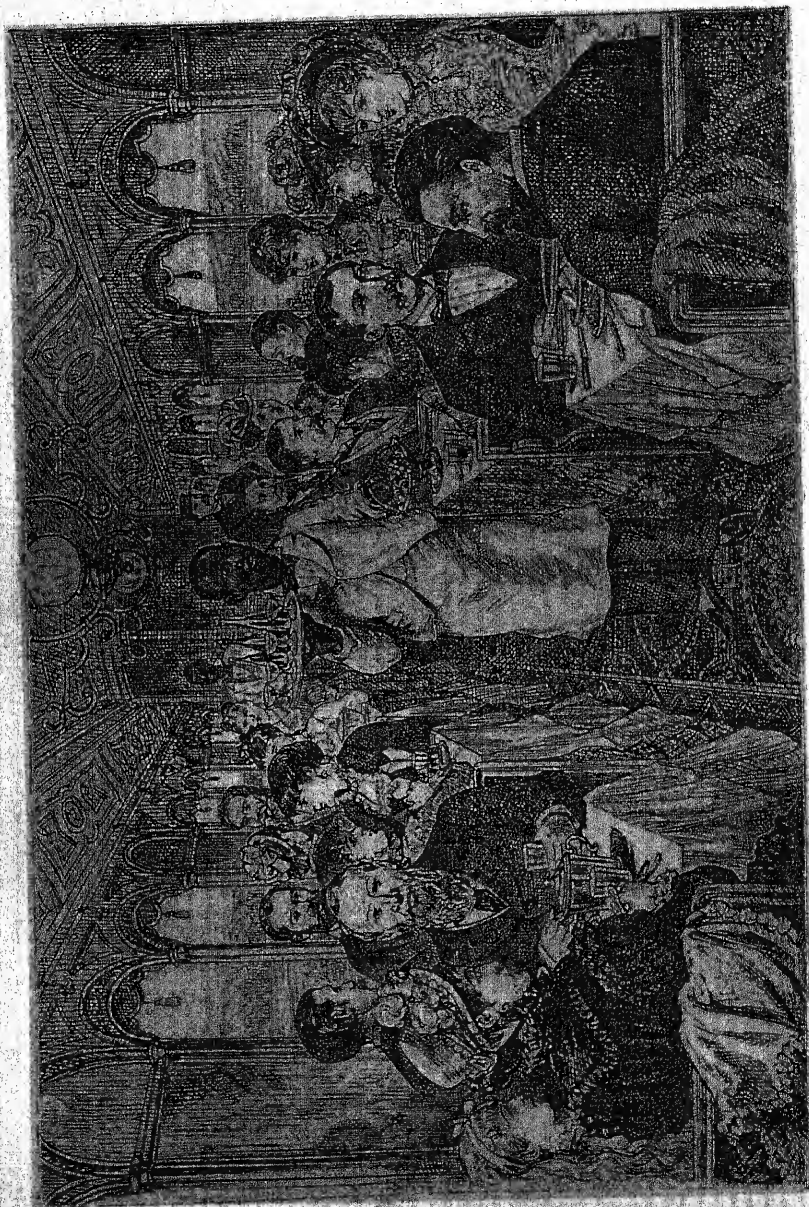
"Before the review was over, I heard a cry of tar and feather. I was ready to faint at the idea of this dreadful operation. I would have gladly quitted the balcony, but I was so much afraid the victim was one of my friends, that I was not able to move; and he indeed proved to be one, tho' in a humble station. For it was Mr. Neilson's poor English groom. You can hardly conceive what I felt when I saw him dragged forward, poor devil, frightened out of his wits. However at the request of some of the officers who had been Neilson's friends, his punishment was changed into that of mounting on a table and begging pardon for having smiled at the regt. He was then drummed and fiddled out of the town, with a strict prohibition of ever being seen in it again."

But though tempers were boiling over on both sides, loyalists and revolutionaries still met in the same drawing-rooms; for the political disputes of the eighteenth century were conducted within the framework of good manners up till the last possible moment. That evening Janet Schaw found herself at a dinner party with Colonel Howe, an officer of the rebel army, a gallant, brilliant and vicious gentleman, described by his contemporary as one who shone equally in the society of "philosophers" and "libertines." She had already met him at her brother's house, and in spite of her prejudice against Americans in general and American revolutionaries in particular, being no prude, she had recognised his quality: "This gentleman" she wrote, "had the worst character you ever heard thro' the whole province. He is however very like a gentleman, much more so indeed than anything I have seen in the country." She is certainly to be congratulated on the urbane audacity with which she handled their encounter on the evening after the review:



The first transcontinental train leaving Sacramento, California, in May 1869, cheered by Chinese workmen.

*From the original painting by Joseph Becker in the collection of Mrs. Harry MacNeil Bland.*



An American Pullman Parlor Railway Car.  
*From an engraving in George Sala's America Revisited, published 1882*



"One might have expected, that tho' I had been imprudent all my life, the present occasion might have inspired me with some degree of caution, and yet I can tell you I had almost incurred the poor groom's fate from my own folly. Several of the officers came up to dine, amongst others Col. Howe, who with less ceremony than might have been expected from his general politeness stepped into an apartment adjoining the hall, and took up a book I had been reading, which he brought open in his hand into the company. I was piqued at his freedom, and reproved him with a half compliment to his general good breeding. He owned his fault and with much gallantry promised to submit to whatever punishment I would inflict. You shall only, said I, read aloud a few pages which I will point out to you, and I am sure you will do Shakespeare justice. He bowed and took the book, but no sooner observed that I had turned up for him, that part of Henry the fourth, where Falstaff described his company,<sup>1</sup> than he coloured like scarlet. I saw he made the application instantly; however he read it thro', tho' not with the vivacity he generally speaks; however he recovered himself and coming close up to me, whispered, 'you will certainly get yourself tarred and feathered; shall I apply to be executioner?'"

The time for dinner party battles was soon at an end. The next day she found soldiers patrolling the town, and citizens, many of them her friends, arrested and held prisoners until they had consented to sign a "test" declaring their support of the revolutionary cause. Shortly afterwards her brother had to escape to a man-of-war; Mr. Neilson's ill-fated groom fell into the hands of some roving rebels while carrying compromising papers; there were rumours that the loyalists were arming the negroes, and reports of a battle "on a place called Bunkershill." Yet Janet Schaw found time to admire the "noble magnolias," blossoming on trees as big as oaks, and complained that the mosquitoes disturbed her night's sleep more than any fear of a negro rising. Right up to the end, when the arrival of a rebel army, and the burning of the fort, made it necessary for her to follow the example of her friends by flying to a battleship, she maintained that unperturbed and superior good-humour which always characterises the English gentry in revolutions abroad.

*Frances Trollope*\*; *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. (Pub. 1832.)

It was a long time before the customs and manners of America

<sup>1</sup> Where Falstaff describes his miserable recruits, Mouldy, Shadow, Wart, Feeble and Bullcalf.

<sup>2</sup> *Frances Trollope* (1780-1863). She followed up her successful book on America with some fifty works of fiction and travel, mostly on controversial subjects, by which she made innumerable enemies, but enough money to keep her family.



came up to British standards of elegance. Some fifty years after Janet Schaw, another well-brought-up, well-educated lady, Frances Trollope, mother of the future novelist Anthony Trollope, recorded her impressions of America with humorous dismay. No doubt her experiences were even more disillusioning than Janet Schaw's share in the War of Independence; for her time was spent not visiting the best houses with a battleship at hand to receive her if things became too unpleasant, but struggling, without means of retreat, to support an improvident husband and six children by starting a fancy goods store in the new town of Cincinnati.

This enterprise was the latest enthusiasm of her adored but dotty husband, who had already wasted a fortune in large-scale amateur farming, and now pictured himself as a great mercantile magnate of the middle west. Known as "the new wonder of the world," or the "infant Hercules," Cincinnati, product of rapid American expansion west of the Alleghany mountains, was actually an ugly, hastily-erected town of about the size of Salisbury, which exhibited all the crudities and self-satisfied pretensions peculiar to prosperous pioneering communities. Here Mrs. Trollope, middle-aged but valiant, was despatched in 1828 with three children and instructions to make a fortune.

She had barely settled in before her husband sent word that she was to delay starting business until he joined her. The half-year spent idly waiting for him must have been depressing enough; but on arriving, he promptly set about building a fantastic palace to house his "bazaar," which within a few months was to become known as "Trollope's Folly" and ruin him all over again. He was safely in England when bankruptcy came, and it was then that poor harassed Mrs. Trollope, in a desperate attempt to come by a little ready money, sat down to write the book which made her a notorious figure in Europe and America.

Unfortunately, she was too discreet to mention her own embittering adventure; in consequence, her readers saw no excuse for her sharp-tongued criticisms of American life and manners. "Terrible coarseness," "audacious contempt for public opinion," "a coarse disregard for all those nice decorums which are sacred in the eyes of a well-bred lady," such were the accusations thrown at her by indignant American journalists and politicians and by the even more indignant Radicals—the friends of American democracy—in England. No lady, one American

She managed to unite the most contrary factions against herself; her propaganda novels attacking child labour and the New Poor Law roused the fury of the conservatives who had been gratified by her criticisms of republican America; in other works she attacked both Jesuits and Non-Conformists. On the continent, however, she had many distinguished friends, including Chateaubriand and Madame Metternich.

declared, could descend to such "coarse delineations," "indelicate allusions," and "bug and spitting stories":—the book must have been written by a man! To the modern reader, however, Mrs. Trollope's lively attacks on American dullness, prudery, puritanism, over-eating, over-dressing, religious hysteria, bad taste and bad manners reveal her as an amusing writer who today would have made an admirable journalist. She seems to have had all the necessary qualities: an all-round, if rather superficial intelligence; a general inquisitiveness which prompted her to talk to everyone, to look at everything, to attend a prayer meeting, a camp meeting, a Quaker meeting, a lecture on phrenology, a public controversy between the reformer Robert Owen and the Reverend Alexander Campbell of Bethany, Kentucky, and a debate in Congress, and to write a chapter entitled: "American Cooking—Evening Parties—Dress—Sleighing—Money-getting Habits—Tax-Gatherer's Notice—Indian Summer—Anecdote of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar"; and most valuable of all, the ability to form a multitude of scattered impressions into a clear-cut and arresting picture.

The first of the many things that shocked her in America was the dirt. Today, when American hygiene has become so efficient as to seem dangerous to many English people, a soulless modern development menacing deeper wisdom and higher thinking, it is surprising to learn of the horror with which nineteenth-century travellers, accustomed to a filthy London, regarded the yet filthier unpaved, undrained, unscavenged towns of America. When Mrs. Trollope came to Cincinnati, only the main street was paved, and this, in the absence of even the most primitive draining system, became a swamp after every shower. As for the "alleys," they were "horrible abominations" which could only become "worse with every passing year."

"We were soon settled in our new dwelling, which looked neat and comfortable enough; but we speedily found that it was devoid of nearly all the accommodation that Europeans conceive necessary to decency and comfort. No pump, no cistern, no drain of any kind, no dustman's cart, or any visible means of getting rid of the rubbish, which vanishes with such celerity in London, that one has not time to think of its existence; but which accumulated so rapidly at Cincinnati, that I sent for my landlord to know in what manner refuse of all kinds was to be disposed of.

'Your help will just have to fix them all into the middle of the street; but you must mind, old woman, that it is the middle. I expect you don't know as we have got a law what forbids throwing such things at the sides of the streets; they must just all be cast right into the middle, and the pigs soon take them off.'

This was the accepted arrangement even in the most civilised of

American towns all through the first half of the century ; ten years after Mrs. Trollope, Dickens wrote a gruesome account of the scavenger pigs of New York.

Almost as bad as the dirt was the dullness. The American nation had learnt to support itself in comfort, even in affluence ; food was everywhere cheap and abundant, everyone was hard at work and making money. But when the forests had been cleared, the houses built, the crops sown and reaped, what was there to do but eat huge meals, chew and spit tobacco, discuss prices and profits ? No one thought of anything beyond what Mrs. Trollope calls the " animal wants," and " Alas ! " as she justly points out, " these go but a little way in the history of a day's enjoyment." The pleasures of living, which the early settlers had been compelled to forego in order to keep alive, had not yet been rediscovered. In the days of the first colonies, the prohibition of all normal entertainments had served to keep an uprooted population in order, to ensure that enough work was done, enough food grown ; but in these more prosperous times it had a deadening effect. Attending church and chapel, once a salutary discipline, had become the chief social event :

" I never saw any people who appeared to live so much without amusement as the Cincinnatians. Billiards are forbidden by law, so are cards. To sell a pack of cards in Ohio subjects the seller to a penalty of fifty dollars. They have no public balls, excepting, I think, six, during the Christmas holidays. They have no concerts. They have no dinner parties.

" They have a theatre, which is, in fact, the only public amusement of this triste little town ; but they seem to care little about it, and either from economy or distaste, it is very little attended. Ladies are rarely seen there, and by far the larger proportion of females deem it an offence against religion to witness the representation of a play. It is in the churches and chapels of the town that the ladies are to be seen in full costume : and I am tempted to believe that a stranger from the continent of Europe would be inclined, on first reconnoitring the city, to suppose that the places of worship were the theatres and *cafés* of the place. No evening in the week but brings throngs of the young and beautiful to the chapels and meeting-houses, all dressed with care, and sometimes with great pretension. . . . Were it not for the churches, indeed, I think there might be a general bonfire of the best bonnets, for I never could discover any other use for them."

In spite of the puritan tradition, much of the newly-made wealth was being turned into bonnets, for the Americans of that period, like all people who attain prosperity after a grinding struggle, were much given to ostentation. Taste, however, was still very crude : the ladies

powdered themselves "immoderately" with pulverised starch; their clothes were elaborate at the expense of comfort and suitability; their manners displayed the false refinement of affectation:

"They do not consult the seasons in the colours or in the style of their costumes; I have often shivered at seeing a young beauty picking her way through the snow with a pale rose-coloured bonnet, set on the very top of her head; I knew one young lady whose pretty little ear was actually frost-bitten from being thus exposed. They never wear muffs or boots, and appear extremely shocked at the sight of comfortable walking shoes and cotton stockings, even when they have to step to their sleighs over ice and snow. They walk in the middle of winter with their poor little toes pinched into a miniature slipper, incapable of excluding as much moisture as might bedew a primrose. I must say in their excuse, however, that they have, almost universally, extremely pretty feet. They do not walk well, nor, in fact, do they ever appear to advantage when in movement. . . . I fancied I could often trace a mixture of affectation and shyness in their little mincing and unsteady step, and the ever-changing position of their hands."

As in all pioneering communities where there is little leisure, and in consequence little intellectual development, there were few interests common to both sexes. Such parties as were given hardly deserved the title, for the men and the women herded to opposite ends of the room, the hard-worked wives to talk of housewifery, the hard-worked husbands to talk of agriculture or business:

"But, whatever may be the talents of the persons who meet together in society, the very shape, form, and arrangement of the meeting is sufficient to paralyse conversation. The women invariably herd together at one part of the room, and the men at the other; but, in justice to Cincinnati, I must acknowledge that this arrangement is by no means peculiar to that city, or to the western side of the Alleghanies. Sometimes a small attempt at music produces a partial re-union; a few of the most daring youths, animated by the consciousness of curled hair and smart waistcoats, approach the pianoforte, and begin to mutter a little to the half-grown pretty things, who are comparing with one another 'how many quarters' music they have had. Where the mansion is of sufficient dignity to have two drawing-rooms, the piano, the little ladies, and the slender gentlemen, are left to themselves, and on such occasions the sound of laughter is often heard to issue from them. But the fate of the other more dignified personages, who are left in the other room, is extremely dismal. The gentlemen spit, talk of elections and the price of produce, and spit again. The ladies look at each other's dresses till they know every pin by heart; talk of Parson Somebody's last



sermon on the day of judgement, on Dr. T'otherbody's new pills for dyspepsia, till the 'tea' is announced, when they all console themselves for whatever they may have suffered in keeping awake, by taking more tea, coffee, hot cake and custard, hoe cake, johnny cake, waffle cake, and dodger cake, pickled peaches and preserved cucumbers, ham, turkey, hung beef, apple sauce, and pickled oysters, than ever were prepared in any other country of the known world. After this massive meal is over, they return to the drawing-room, and it always appeared to me that they remained together as long as they could bear it, and then they rise en masse, cloak, bonnet, shawl, and exit."

Such a life was a real penance for the sociable, civilised Mrs. Trollope who, as she herself admits, could hardly endure the absence of "the many pleasurable sensations derived from the little elegances and refinements enjoyed by the middle classes of Europe." Of course there was always nature: the "richness and brilliance" of the autumn trees, the "sparkling brightness" of the Ohio river, the "noble tulip trees" and "magnificent" beeches and chestnuts on the Kentucky side, somewhat alleviated the drab squalor of Cincinnati. But Mrs. Trollope belonged to that type of nature lover which regards a landscape as a setting for a picnic, and for this purpose the country round Cincinnati was singularly ill-adapted. Mosquitoes, locusts, beetles and hornets, suffocating heat and treacherous masses of fallen leaves and logs that had been "rotting since the flood," soon put a stop to expeditions with "books, albums, pencils and sandwiches"; never again, she promised herself soon after her arrival, would she venture for pleasure into the "grim stove-like forests of Ohio." Even "the sterile beauty of rocks" was wanting, though she endeavoured to make the best of some stones in the river Licking:

"The river Licking flows into the Ohio nearly opposite Cincinnati; it is a pretty winding stream, and two or three miles from its mouth has a brisk rapid dancing among white stones, which, in the absence of better rocks, we found very picturesque."

On leaving Cincinnati, a place she "cordially disliked"—and with so much more reason than her book reveals—she visited the New England states. But even here there was no escape from tedium. If manners were rather less gross, puritanism was rather more oppressive; the rigidity of civilised America seemed to her no better than the boorishness of the backwoods. It was certainly a relief to have left behind "the 'half-horse, half-alligator' tribes of the west," but what pleasure was there in a city, like Baltimore, that provided "no fêtes, no fairs, no merry-makings, no music in the streets, no 'Punch,' no puppet-shows?" In Philadelphia "religious severity" was such that "not a note of music

or sound of mirth " was to be heard after sunset, and on Sundays chains were actually thrown across the streets to prevent the inhabitants from using their carriages. As for the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, fanatical prudery had turned it into a resort for dirty old men :

" One of the rooms of this academy had inscribed over its door ANTIQUE STATUE GALLERY. The door was open, but just within was a screen, which prevented any objects in the room being seen from without. Upon my pausing to read this inscription, an old woman who appeared to officiate as guardian of the gallery, bustled up, and addressing me with an air of much mystery, said : ' Now, ma'am, now : this is just the time for you—nobody can see you—make haste.'

I stared at her with unfeigned surprise, and disengaging my arm, which she had taken apparently to hasten my movements, I very gravely asked her meaning.

Only, ma'am, that the ladies like to go into that room by themselves, when there be no gentlemen watching them.'

On entering this mysterious apartment, the first thing I remarked, was a written paper, deprecating the disgusting depravity which had led some of the visitors to mark and deface the casts in a most indecent manner. This abomination had unquestioningly been occasioned by the coarse-minded custom which sends alternate groups of males and females into the room."

Only in New York she felt tolerably at home, where in the " dwelling houses of the higher classes " she found : " Little tables, looking and smelling like flowers beds, portfolios, knicknacks, bronzes, busts, cameos, and alabaster vases, illustrated copies of lady-like rhymes bound in silk, and, in short, all the coxcombalties of the drawing-room scattered about with the same profuse and studied negligence as with us."

Yet even here, church was the chief amusement. Dinner parties were rare, cards seldom used ; the gentlemen spat in the theatres, the concerts were poor, the art exhibitions pitiable. It was indeed useless to look to the Americans for taste, elegance, gaiety or good manners. " I think no one will be disappointed," she reasonably observes, " who visits the country expecting to find no more than common sense might teach him to look for, namely, a vast continent, by far the greater part of which is still in the state in which nature left it, and a busy, bustling, industrious population, hacking and hewing their way through it."

Unfortunately most English people, from Raleigh onwards, had expected so much more : a land of easy wealth, where gold lay on the ground and food fell off the trees ; a land of noble savages, chivalrous gentlemen, freedom, democracy, opportunity ; a land where an improvident eccentric could make a fortune out of a fancy goods bazaar. Few British travellers have described America without the bias of disappointment ; the mediæ-

val legend of the East was too powerful to be destroyed by the hard welcome of China, it was merely transferred to the New World.

*Charles Dickens*<sup>1</sup>; *American Notes*. (Pub. 1842.)

Even Dickens allowed himself to be disappointed. After the snug frowstiness of Victorian England, the most civilised districts of America seemed to him horribly raw, and his brilliant description of the New England countryside almost convinces the reader that the mortar was as new, the walls as damp, as he imagined them to be :

"These towns and cities of New England (many of which would be villages in Old England), are as favourable specimens of rural America, as their people are of rural Americans. The well-trimmed lawns and green meadows of home are not there ; and the grass, compared with our ornamental plots and pastures, is rank, and rough, and wild : but delicate slopes of land, gently-swelling hills, wooded valleys, and slender streams, abound. Every little colony of houses has its church and school-house peeping from among the white roofs and shady trees ; every house is the whitest of white ; every Venetian blind the greenest of green ; every fine day's sky the bluest of blue. A sharp dry wind and a slight frost had so hardened the roads when we alighted at Worcester, that their furrowed tracks were like ridges of granite. There was the usual aspect of newness on every object, of course. All the buildings looked as if they had been built and painted that morning, and could be taken down on Monday with very little trouble. In the keen evening air, every sharp outline looked a hundred times sharper than ever. The clean cardboard colonnades had no more perspective than a Chinese bridge on a tea-cup, and appeared equally well calculated for use. The razor-like edges of the detached cottages seemed to cut the very wind as it whistled against them, and to send it smarting on its way with a shriller cry than before. Those slightly-built wooden dwellings behind which the sun was setting with such brilliant lustre, could be so looked through and through, that the idea of any inhabitant being able to hide himself from the public gaze, or to have any secrets from the public eye, was not entertainable for a moment. Even where a blazing fire shone through the uncurtained window of some distant house, it had the air of being newly lighted, and of lacking warmth ; and instead of awakening thoughts of a snug chamber, bright with faces that first saw the light round the same hearth, and ruddy with warm hangings, it came upon one suggestive of a smell of new mortar and damp walls."

<sup>1</sup> *Charles Dickens* (1812-1870), the great novelist, visited America and Canada in 1842. His dislike of the Americans was aggravated by the fact that an unjust copyright law had enabled them to pirate his most popular works.

Other English travellers had tried to rationalise their dislike of America ; Mrs. Trollope, for instance, had summed up what she resented as " want of refinement," and argued that this must have a lowering effect on American morals and character. But Dickens was too masterful a figure to bother about justifying himself ; he brazenly admitted that he disliked America because it was so new. His attitude was all the more capricious because he was well aware that this very newness was responsible for much that he, as a social reformer, was bound to admire. Some of the institutions, for the blind, the orphans, the destitute and the delinquents, run on modern lines that would have seemed revolutionary in England, were, he admitted, excellent ; while the conditions of the women factory workers at Lowell were so good as to seem shocking, he realised, to the average English person :

" I happened to arrive at the first factory just as the dinner hour was over, and the girls were returning to their work ; indeed the stairs of the mill were thronged with them as I ascended. They were all well dressed, but not to my way of thinking above their condition : for I like to see the humbler classes of society careful of their dress and appearance, and even, if they please, decorated with such little trinkets as come within the compass of their means. . . . They were healthy in appearance, many of them remarkably so, and had the manners and deportment of young women : not of degraded beasts of burden."

These girls lived in boarding houses run by women whose character had been " subjected to the most searching and thorough inquiry." A few children were employed, but they, according to the laws of the state, were not allowed to work more than nine months of the year ; during the remaining three they were to be educated, and schools were provided near the factories for this purpose. Most astonishing of all, according to English standards, the girls were encouraged to acquire culture in their leisure time :

" I am now going to state three facts, which will startle a large class of readers on this side of the Atlantic, very much.

Firstly, there is a joint-stock piano in a great many of the boarding houses. Secondly, nearly all these young ladies subscribe to circulating libraries. Thirdly, they have got up among themselves a periodical called *The Lowell Offering*, ' A repository of original articles, written exclusively by females actively employed in the mills '—which is duly printed, published, and sold ; and whereof I brought away from Lowell four hundred good solid pages, which I have read from beginning to end.

The large class of readers startled by these facts, will exclaim, with one voice, ' How very preposterous ! ' On my deferentially inquiring why,



they will answer, 'these things are above their station.' In reply to that objection, I would beg to ask what their station is.

It is their station to work. And they *do* work. They labour in these mills, upon an average, twelve hours a day, which is unquestionably work, and pretty tight work too."

Yet though observation showed him that the Americans were in many ways progressive, intelligent and humane, instinctively he felt that this was a sinister and ferocious land; like John Josselyn, he was struck by the excesses in nature and in man. The colours were gaudier, the summers hotter, the winters colder, than elsewhere; and even in New England, the inescapable forests, choked with decomposition and decay, seemed too savage and forlorn for human habitation. "The train" he complains, "calls at stations in the woods, where the wild impossibility of anybody having the smallest reason to get out, is only to be equalled by the apparent desperate hopelessness of there being anybody to get in." The ladies and gentlemen of Boston might behave with "perfect politeness, courtesy and good breeding," the House of Industry (the workhouse) might bear the inscription: "Worthy of Notice. Self-Government. Quietude, and Peace, are Blessings," but "down among the shipping," the popular seamen's preacher roared to his congregation: "'Who are these—who are they—who are these fellows? Where do they come from? Where are they going to? Come from! What's the answer?'—leaning out of the pulpit, and pointing downward with his right hand: 'From below!'—starting back again, and looking at the sailors before him, 'From below, my brethren. From under the hatches of sin, battered down above you by the evil one.'"

Prosperous New York, which had reassured Mrs. Trollope with its drawing-room coxcombalties, appeared to him a crude, bustling city, none too clean, and concealing, behind a façade of stony respectability, violence, depravity and vice. By day, the rich flaunted themselves on Broadway, but their ostentation was unsophisticated, almost barbaric; after all, this was only a glorified country town, and the clumsy make of the carriages was a constant reminder of the wilderness that surrounded it. At night, puritanical restrictions emptied the gas-lit streets of everything but the scavenging pigs; prohibited all the rattling tinsel fun enjoyed by the citizens of older, more easy-going civilisations. Pleasure, so strictly repressed, took grim and distorted forms: hard drinking, abusive journalism, savage debauchery in the sailors' taverns and rotting tenements of the Five Points.

"Was there ever such a sunny street as this Broadway! The pavement stones are polished with the tread of feet until they shine again; the red bricks of the houses might be yet in the dry, hot kilns; and the roofs of these omnibuses look as though, if water were poured

on them, they would hiss and smoke, and smell like half-quenched fires. No stint of omnibuses here ! Half-a-dozen have gone by within as many minutes. Plenty of hackney cabs and coaches too ; gigs, phaetons, large-wheeled tilburies, and private carriages—rather of a clumsy make, and not very different from the public vehicles, but built for the heavy roads beyond the city pavement. Negro coachmen and white ; in straw hats, black hats, white hats, glazed caps ; in coats of drab, black, brown, green, blue, nankeen, striped jean and linen ; and there, in that one instance (look while it passes, or it will be too late), in suits of livery. Some southern republican that, who puts his blacks in uniform, and swells with Sultan pomp and power. . . . Heaven save the ladies, how they dress ! We have seen more colours in these ten minutes, than we should have seen elsewhere, in as many days. What various parasols ! what rainbow silks and satins ! what pinking of thin stockings and pinching of thin shoes, and fluttering of ribbons and silk tassels, and display of rich cloaks with gaudy hoods and linings ! ”

But towards nightfall this flashy crowd abandoned the streets to the pigs :

“ They are the city scavengers, these pigs. Ugly brutes they are ; having, for the most part, scanty brown backs, like the lids of old horsehair trunks ; spotted with unwholesome black blotches. They have long, gaunt legs, too, and such peaked snouts, that if one of them could be persuaded to sit for his profile, nobody would recognise it for a pig’s likeness. . . . At this hour, just as evening is closing in, you will see them roaming towards bed by scores, eating their way to the last. . . .

“ The streets and shops are lighted now ; and as the eye travels down the long thoroughfare, dotted with bright jets of gas, it is reminded of Oxford Street, or Piccadilly. Here and there a flight of broad stone cellar-steps appears, and a painted lamp directs you to the Bowling Saloon, or Ten-Pin alley ; Ten-Pins being a game of mingled chance and skill, invented when the legislature passed an act forbidding Nine-Pins. At other downward flights of steps, are other lamps, marking the whereabouts of oyster-cellars. . . .

“ But how quiet the streets are ! Are there no itinerant bands ; no wind or stringed instruments ? No, not one. By day, are there no Punches, Fantoccini, Dancing-Dogs, Jugglers, Conjurers, Orchestras, or even Barrel-organs ? No, not one. Yes, I remember one. One barrel-organ and a dancing monkey—sportive by nature, but fast fading into a dull lumpish monkey, of the Utilitarian school. Beyond that, nothing lively ; no, not so much as a white mouse in a twirling cage.

"Are there no amusements? Yes. There is a lecture-room across the way, from which that glare of light proceeds, and there may be evening service for the ladies thrice a week, or oftener. For the young gentlemen, there is the counting-house, the store, the bar-room: the latter, as you may see through these windows, pretty full. Hark! to the clinking sound of hammers breaking lumps of ice, and to the cool gurgling of the pounded bits, as, in the process of mixing, they are poured from glass to glass! No amusements? What are these suckers of cigars and swallows of strong drinks, whose hats and legs we see in every possible variety of twist, doing, but amusing themselves? What are the fifty newspapers, which those precocious urchins are bawling down the street, and which are kept filed within, what are they but amusements? Not vapid waterish amusements, but good strong stuff; dealing in round abuse and blackguard names; pulling off the roofs of private houses, as the Halting Devil did in Spain; pimping and pandering for all degrees of vicious taste, and gorging with coined lies the most voracious maw; imputing to every man in public life the coarsest and vilest motives; scaring away from the stabbed and prostrate body-politic, every Samaritan of clear conscience and good deeds; and setting on, with yell and whistle and the clapping of foul hands, the vilest vermin and worst birds of prey.—No amusements!"

More frightful than any of the slums of London was the Five Points, home of the pigs, the murderers and thieves, where lanes and alleys "paved with mud knee-deep," led to low bars, gaming houses, and the "cramped hutches" of the poor.

"Debauchery has made the very houses prematurely old. See how the rotten beams are tumbling down, and how the patched and broken windows seem to scowl dimly, like eyes that have been hurt in drunken frays. Many of the pigs live here. Do they ever wonder why their master walks upright in lieu of going on all-fours? and why they talk instead of grunting?

"So far, nearly every house is a low tavern; and on the bar-room walls, are coloured prints of Washington, and Queen Victoria of England, and the American Eagle. Among the pigeon-holes that hold the bottles, are pieces of plate-glass and coloured paper, for there is, in some sort, a taste for decoration, even here. And as seamen frequent these haunts, there are wartime pictures by the dozen: of partings between sailors and their lady-loves, portraits of William, of the ballad, and his Black-Eyed Susan; of Will Watch, the Bold Smuggler; of Paul Jones the Pirate, and the like: on which the painted eyes of Queen Victoria, and of Washington to boot, rest in as strange companionship, as on most of the scenes that are enacted in their wondering presence.

"What place is this, to which the squalid street conducts us? A

kind of square of leprous houses, some of which are attainable only by crazy wooden stairs without. What lies beyond this tottering flight of steps, that creak beneath our tread? —a miserable room, lighted by one dim candle, and destitute of all comfort, save that which may be hidden in a wretched bed. Beside it, sits a man: his elbows on his knees: his forehead hidden in his hands. 'What ails that man?' asks the foremost officer. 'Fever,' he sullenly replies, without looking up. Conceive the fancies of a fevered brain, in such a place as this!

Washington, on the other hand, lacked even the lurid glamour of low life; at this period the capital of America<sup>1</sup> seems to have been as drably ramshackle as certain present-day white villages in the more backward parts of colonial Africa:

"The hotel in which we live, is a long row of small houses fronting on the street, and opening at the back upon a common yard, in which hangs a great triangle. Whenever a servant is wanted, somebody beats on this triangle from one stroke up to seven, according to the number of the house in which his presence is required: and as all the servants are always being wanted, and none of them ever come, this enlivening engine is in full performance the whole day through. Clothes are drying in the same yard; female slaves, with cotton handkerchiefs twisted round their heads, are running to and fro on the hotel business; black waiters cross and recross with dishes in their hands; two great dogs are playing upon a mound of loose bricks in the centre of the little square; a pig is turning up his stomach to the sun, and grunting 'that's comfortable!'; and neither the men, nor the women, nor the dogs, nor the pig, nor any created creature, takes the smallest notice of the triangle, which is tingling madly all the time.

"I walk to the front window, and look across the road upon a long, straggling row of houses, one story high, terminating, nearly opposite, but a little to the left, in a melancholy piece of waste ground with frowzy grass, which looks like a small piece of country that has taken to drinking, and has quite lost itself. Standing anyhow and all wrong, upon this open space, like something meteoric that has fallen down from the moon, is an odd, lop-sided, one-eyed kind of wooden building, that looks like a church, with a flag-staff as long as itself sticking out of a steeple something larger than a tea-chest. Under the window is a small stand of coaches, whose slave-drivers are sunning themselves on the steps of our door, and talking idly together. The three most obtrusive houses near at hand, are the three meanest. On one, a shop, which never has anything in the window, and never has the door open—is painted in large characters, 'THE CITY LUNCH.' At

<sup>1</sup> It had, however, only been the capital since 1800.



another, which looks like a backway to somewhere else, but is an independent building in itself, oysters are procurable in every style. At a third, which is a very, very little tailor's shop, pants are fixed to order ; or in other words, pantaloons are made to measure. And that is our street in Washington."

His tour was designed to show him the best of America ; yet there was always so much to disconcert him : the dangerous wooden railway bridges without parapets, the handsome stone and marble houses stranded in half-built streets, the tornadoes of wind and dust, the inevitable spitting and dirt. Town and country appeared to him equally squalid : "the same decay and gloom that overhang the way by which it is approached, hover about the town of Richmond." Barnum's hotel in Baltimore was the only place in all his travelling where he found the elementary comforts of curtains to his bed and enough water for washing.

Such was so-called civilised America. Further west, in the land beyond the Alleghanies where poor optimistic Mrs. Trollope had sighed in vain for the refinements of English middle-class life, he accepted barbarism, and enjoyed the scenery with the jovial stoicism of an explorer. From Pittsburgh to Cincinnati he travelled by river in a crazy paddle steamer, full of emigrants, with furnace fires and machinery, open to the winds, raging and roaring below a gim-crack wooden superstructure. Even worse than the danger and discomfort of this journey was the grim aspect of his fellow-travellers. The Americans who were then forcing their way back into the forests of the interior, were in much the same state as the colonists who had shocked Janet Schaw in South Carolina more than fifty years earlier ; oppressed by the magnitude of their struggle against nature, they were listless, coarse and unsociable. But Dickens, with his great insight into human nature, at least understood their problems, and the whole tragedy of pioneering is summed up in his terrible little sketch of the party of settlers who landed on the river bank.

"At dinner, there is nothing to drink upon the table, but great jugs full of cold water. Nobody says anything, at any meal, to anybody. All the passengers are very dismal, and seem to have tremendous secrets weighing on their minds. There is no conversation, no laughter, no cheerfulness, no sociability, except in spitting ; and that is done in silent fellowship round the stove, when the meal is over. Every man sits down, dull and languid ; swallows his fare as if breakfasts, dinners, and suppers, were necessities of nature never to be coupled with recreation or enjoyment ; and having bolted his food in a gloomy silence, bolts himself, in the same state. But for these animal obser-

vances, you might suppose the whole male portion of the company to be the melancholy ghosts of departed book-keepers, who had fallen dead at the desk ; such is their weary air of business and calculation. Undertakers on duty would be sprightly beside them ; and a collation of funeral-baked meats, in comparison with these meals, would be a sparkling festivity. . . .

" Further down still, sits a man who is going some miles beyond . . . to ' improve ' a newly-discovered copper mine. He carries the village—that is to be—with him : a few frame cottages, and an apparatus for smelting the copper. He carries its people too. They are partly American and partly Irish, and herd together on the lower deck ; where they amused themselves last evening till the night was pretty far advanced, by alternatively firing off pistols and singing hymns."

. . . . .  
" Occasionally, we stop for a few minutes, maybe to take in wood, maybe for passengers, at some small town or village. . . ; but the banks are for the most part deep solitudes, overgrown with trees, which, hereabouts are already in leaf and very green. For miles, and miles, and miles, these solitudes are unbroken by any sign of human life or trace of human footstep ; nor is anything seen to move about them but the blue jay, whose colour is so bright, and yet so delicate, that it looks like a flying flower. . . .

" Five men, as many women, and a little girl. All their worldly goods are a bag, a large chest and an old chair : one, old, high-backed, rush-bottomed chair ; a solitary settler in itself. They are rowed ashore in the boat, while the vessel stands a little way off awaiting its return, the water being shallow. They are landed at the foot of a high bank, on the summit of which are a few log cabins, attainable only by a long winding path. It is growing dusk ; but the sun is very red, and shines in the water and on some of the tree-tops, like fire.

" The men get out of the boat first ; help out the women ; take out the bag, the chest, the chair ; bid the rowers ' good-bye,' and shove the boat off for them. At the first splash of the oars in the water, the oldest woman of the party sits down in the old chair, close to the water's edge, without speaking a word. None of the others sit down, though the chest is large enough for many seats. They all stand where they landed, as if stricken into stone ; and look after the boat. So they remain, quite still and silent : the old woman and her old chair, in the centre ; the bag and the chest upon the shore, without anybody heeding them : all eyes fixed upon the boat. It comes alongside, is made fast, the men jump on board, the engine is put in motion, and we go hoarsely on again. I can see them through my glass, when, in the distance and increasing darkness, they are mere specks to the eye : lingering there

still : the old woman in the old chair, and all the rest about her : not stirring in the least degree. And thus I slowly lose sight of them."

America wore out generation after generation of pioneers, hacking and hewing their way into the magnificent but brutal forests. Each newly-captured area imposed its blight of squalor and gloom, to be transformed by years of toil into a crude, lead-headed prosperity. It was not until the end of the nineteenth century, when the devastating civil war was over, when the transcontinental railway had linked the old colonial east with the middle western farms and the new gold and silver settlements of the Pacific coast, that prosperity overflowed into luxury and elegance, and the oppression of nature, after three centuries, was lifted from the American mind.

*George Sala<sup>1</sup>; America Revisited. From the Bay of New York to the Gulf of Mexico and from Lake Michigan to the Pacific. (Pub. 1882.)*

When George Sala, the flamboyant Victorian journalist, visited the country in 1879, the bleakness of American life, which had shocked earlier English travellers, had given place to superabundant opulence ; and the Americans, who had always seemed so dour, had acquired the ebullience, enthusiasm and energy which still astonishes Europe. Indeed it is hard to believe that Sala describes the same places or the same race as Dickens and Mrs. Trollope, so dramatic was the change that had taken place in half a century. Wealth, new and exuberant, was everywhere apparent : in the marble-fronted mansions of New York, in the great "Grant Parade" in Philadelphia, in the Carnival of New Orleans, in the stock-yards of Chicago, and in the Palace Hotel of San Francisco, the most luxurious of the luxury hotels that were to be found in every considerable town.

Sala was then at the height of his reputation, a world-popular figure, a celebrated *bon viveur* accustomed to command the best that Europe could provide ; yet even he was impressed by the magnificence of American hospitality. From the moment he said goodbye to his

<sup>1</sup> *George Augustus Sala (1828-1895).* The son of a struggling, though ladylike actress, at sixteen he was thrown on his own resources in London, and during the ensuing years saw the more lurid side of Victorian life while making a precarious living as scene painter, caricaturist, and engraver for such periodicals as *The Death Warrant*, a weekly specialising in murders. As a journalist he was unsuccessful until he attracted the notice of Dickens and became a regular contributor to *Household Words*. He was later employed by the *Daily Telegraph* as Special Correspondent, was sent to America during the Civil War and all over Europe, and became a world celebrity. He had extravagant tastes and a florid appearance : he was stout, and his nose is said to have matched the crimson ties that he habitually wore with white waistcoats.

fellow-passengers on board the Cunard liner in the docks of New York, drinking healths in champagne to the accompaniment of "For he's a jolly good fellow," he was swept into a whirlwind of entertainment which carried him from end to end and coast to coast of America. The social leaders of New York, Philadelphia, Washington and New Orleans, the "Railway Kings," "Silver Kings," "Corn Kings," "Pork-Packing Kings" and "Hotel Kings" of the middle and far west, even the newspaper reporters, overwhelmed him with "invitations and courtesies"; his twenty-thousand-mile journey was a "progress," he declared, "a great deal more brilliant than I ever dreamt it would be or than I deserve."

New York had grown almost out of recognition since he had first seen it in 1863 :

"When I came here first, Twenty-fifth-street was accounted as being sufficiently far 'up town,' and Fortieth-street was Ultima Thule. Beyond that the course of town lots planned out and prospected, but structurally yet to come, was only marked by boulders of the living rock having weird *graffiti* eulogistic of the virtues of Drake's Plantation Bitters, the Night Blooming Cereus, the Balm of a Thousand Flowers, and Old Dr. Jacob Townsend's Sarsaparilla. What has become of those strange stencillings on the living rock? Where I remember wildernesses I behold now terraces after terraces of lordly mansions of brown stone, some with marble façades, others wholly of pure white marble, gleaming like the product of Carrara in the clear blue sky, and lacking only a few palm trees and orange trees to surpass in beauty the villas of the Promenade des Anglais at Nice."

American society, which had formerly bored English visitors by its rigid high-mindedness, had now gained that degree of sophistication which encourages tolerance and superficiality :

"The fashionable season is beginning, and society is brilliant, cosmopolitan, refined, intelligent, and almost totally free from prejudice. Politics are wholly tabooed from polite conversation, and people talk no more about the Eastern Question than they do about the Alabama Claims. Hospitality is as unstinted as it is splendid; and masquerades are not looked upon as they are with us as shockingly wicked things, to be repressed with the most wrathful rigour of which the Middlesex magistrates are capable."

Indeed, he found New York less puritanical than London : no one wrote spoil-sport letters to the papers; no one tried to impose a régime of "asceticism and gloom." Society openly flaunted its frivolities : at night, the masqueraders crowded the platforms of the elevated



railroad ; on New Year's Day, from noon onwards, every grand house was illuminated as though for a ball, while the ladies, blazing in full evening dress, sat in their drawing-rooms to receive the gentlemen, also in full evening dress, who paid them calls of precisely fifteen minutes.

Life was gayer than in Paris, St. Petersburg, or Madrid ; it was also more expensive. The florists, confectioners, silversmiths and French milliners were making "gigantic fortunes" ; that "consummate caterer," the famous Delmonico, was clearing thousands of dollars a week in his palatial restaurant. The ladies of fashion embellished the dashing silhouette of their corseted waists, bustles, trains, and high-piled hair, with an intricate profusion of flowers, flounces, lace, embroidery and jewels. One wore a seven-hundred-dollar dress with a train of ruby-red brocade edged with "a pure gold cord as thick as the index finger," the front was made of solid cloth of gold, "with embroidered lace let in, and striped insertions of superb bronze beading on lace."

Luxury, being recent, took modern forms ; Sala was one of the first Englishmen to experience the dizzy thrill of New York's mechanical innovations :

"Meanwhile, it is not at all unpleasant to dwell in Cosmopolis, to have at one's disposal a turkey-carpeted, bird's eye maple and plate-glass lined elevator which conveys you to the one hundred and ninety-fifth storey of the Tower of Babel, if you live in one of the big hotels, and to hear a confusion of tongues going on around you, till you begin to ask yourself seriously of what nationality you may personally be, and whether that stormy voyage across the Atlantic, . . . was not, after all, a tempestuous dream. That I could not find my 'sea legs' I owned in a former letter ; but I have as much difficulty in New York in finding my land legs. My perambulations are more of a perpendicular than of a horizontal nature. I am always going up and down in an elevator . . . ; and when I am free from the pleasant thralldom of the 'lift,' I find myself the slave of the horse tramway cars, or else scudding through space at an altitude of sixty or seventy feet above the street on the Elevated Railroad."

Anything new and sensational was a subject of popular gossip ; anything which could be described by the new word "boom," which Sala was now to introduce to the British public :

"Now a 'Boom,' as I understand it, is the very reverse to a 'fizzle' and the antipodes to a 'fraud.' A 'Boom,' whether it apply to the expected nomination of General Ulysses S. Grant for the next Presidency, the Nicaraguan Canal scheme, the Egyptian Obelisk, which (chiefly

through the unwearied efforts of the Editor of the *New York World*) is to be brought from Alexandria and set up in New York, obviously in order to bring about the utter collapse of our Cleopatra's Needle, and to make the Luxor at Paris feel 'mean,' the grain operations of Mr. J. Keene, and Mr. Vanderbilt's recent colossal sale of New York Central stock, those are all big things that for a moment make a big noise, and they are all consequently entitled to rank as 'Booms.' After a time the 'Boom' has a tendency to go out with a splutter, and an unmelodious twang."

The Grant Boom was the most spectacular. General Grant, hero of the Civil War, twice President, was then being put forward for a third term in office. In Philadelphia, Sala saw a stupendous parade in his honour, which seems, however, to have been less a tribute to the general than to American industry :

"This section of the Parade comprised a hundred and fifty operatives from the Germantown Mills, bearing 'regalia' composed of different oils and wools. They were followed by a huge wagon laden high with woollen fabrics, and surmounted by an abnormal banner in the shape of a Brobdignagian stocking woven in the device and colours of the Stars and Stripes. . . .

"For some mysterious reason quite inscrutable to me, the Consumers' Ice Company figured as a political organisation in this astounding Parade. These Hyperboreans had with them a wagon laden with effigies of eagles, cannon, and a huge bust of General Grant, all made out of solid ice. This Arctic art was shocking to me, wedged as I was in the centre of the cold crowd, and so hideously did my teeth chatter that I could find it neither in my heart nor in my cachinatory muscles to grin when a number of garishly-painted and gilded chariots tottered by crowded with strange beings in masquerading attire; kangaroos and baboons, clowns and crowned kings. What did these mummies here? What political organisation did they typify? Mystery. The Iron and Steel Delegation, 2,450 strong, all wearing purple badges. That stalwart Delegation I could very well comprehend. Trucks bearing forges in full blast, with 'smutty smiths' at their anvils. Trucks full of minstrels with tin horns—most sincerely do I hope that *they* never perform out of Philadelphia, playing airs from 'Faninitza' and 'H.M.S. Pinafore.' A crane-beam christened after General Grant, forged by an enterprising Philadelphian firm for the Russian Government, fifteen feet long, weighing one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and claiming to be the biggest crane-beam in the world. . . . The brickmakers, the gas-manufacturers, and the soap-makers—the latter with the effigy of a Red-skin plentifully lathered with soap, and bearing the superscription, 'Settling the Indian Question.'"

And this was the town where Mrs. Trollope had complained of the absence of sounds of mirth ; where Dickens had been struck by " an assumption of taste and criticism, savouring rather of those genteel discussions upon the same themes, in connection with Shakespeare and the Musical Glasses, of which we read in the *Vicar of Wakefield* ! "

Industrialisation had transformed the character of American life. By the use of machinery, man had at last got the better of nature, and the energies which had so long been consumed in an adverse struggle now burst out into strident constructive activity. Iron works, steel works, flour mills, cotton mills, stock-yards, brick-yards, breweries, tanneries, and " pork packing establishments " had sprung up in towns old and new. Business, formerly a matter of glum calculation, had become a break-neck gamble. In Philadelphia, once the city of silence and decorum, the transactions of the business men in the hall of the Continental Hotel were so rude and rowdy that ladies were confined to the upper stories :

" Meanwhile the ears of the groundlings below are split by a tornado of tempestuous talk. The *propos des buveurs* in Rabelais, the *tohu-bohu* of the Paris Bourse in full blast of Mammon yell, and Aldridge's yard on a Saturday afternoon, would be as Quakers' meetings in point of noise compared with the halls of the Continental."

The railways, now stretching from Atlantic to Pacific, were greatly responsible for these changes. New towns had appeared all along that " iron network " " of the day before yesterday " which spread from Chicago into the primitive lands beyond, had become rich overnight by supplying the markets of the populated east. Distance, the curse of America, had been defeated ; those dreary tracts of forest and prairie, across which earlier travellers had painfully crawled on foot, on horseback, by covered wagon, coach or steamer, had become innocuous to the passengers who whirled through them in the overheated, mahogany-panelled " Pullman hotel cars," feasting on juicy steaks, fried oysters, *omelette au rhum* and Californian pears.

" From the prairie fire of Leatherstocking, and the pioneer camping out in these regions no more than twenty years ago, to the *friandises* of the Café Anglais and the Maison Dorée there has been seemingly but one step. Nothing preparatory, nothing intermediate. A misshapen billet of wood today, and the god of Mercury covered all over with the finest-beaten gold-leaf tomorrow. Then a grisly bear on four legs, growling fiercely. Now the Patent Philocomal Ursine Pomade at a dollar a pot."

Chicago, the railway junction between east and west, and the

commercial outlet for the rich agricultural area of the northern Mississippi valley, had in forty years grown from a hamlet into a city second only to New York, with the largest grain market in the world. Nothing could exceed the luxury of its Grand Pacific Hotel, which Sala regarded as "Wonder Number One among the marvels of Chicago":

"Never in my life before—no, never: I disdain all qualifying adverbs—had I beheld such gorgeous hotel clerks. Diamonds threaten to become 'small potatoes' now, after the discoveries of the Scotch chemists, and the candid avowal of Mr. Maskeleyne; else I might expatiate on the brilliant breast-pins, studs, and sleeve buttons of the Grand Pacific clerks. . . . German Grand Dukes travelling incognito, officers commanding regiments of Household Cavalry, cashiers of the Bank of England, managing directors of fire-insurance companies, captains of iron-clads in mufti, pshaw! comparison fails me. Naught but themselves could be their parallels. . . .

"I modestly confessed my unworthiness to occupy a private parlour, so we were presently installed in a spacious and handsome apartment on the first floor, of the excellent American pattern known 'as an alcove bedroom.' I may very briefly describe it. Height at least fifteen feet; two immense plate-glass windows; beautifully frescoed ceiling; couch, easy chairs, rocking chairs, foot-stools in profusion, covered with crimson velvet, large writing table for gentleman, pretty *escritoire* for lady; two towering cheval glasses; handsomely carved wardrobe and dressing table; commanding pier glass over marble mantelpiece; adjoining bath-room beautifully fitted; rich carpet, and finally the bed, in a deep alcove, impenetrably screened from the visitor's gaze by elegant lace curtains. Now, I call that a bedroom, and no mistake."

The city itself was a fantastic phenomenon; its very existence was a proof of super-human energy of the Americans:

"The Third Wonder of Chicago<sup>1</sup> is undoubtedly Chicago herself. Just ponder a little. Forty years ago this city which now contains five hundred thousand inhabitants, and in another fifteen will probably contain a million, was a petty Indian trading post. The business portion of the city is now fourteen feet above the level of Lake Michigan. It was formerly much lower, but in 1856 the entire district was raised bodily to a height of nine feet by means of jack-screws inserted beneath the houses and worked night and day by half-turns and with an imperceptible motion. . . . Now ponder again. In October, '71, Chicago was 'burnt down.' . . . In July, '74, another great fire swept over Chicago, . . . But Chicago has proved herself equal to the occasion; whether the city was to be screwed up or burned down she has preserved her high

<sup>1</sup> The second wonder of Chicago was, according to Sala, its daily Press.



spirits and her untiring enterprise and go-aheadness. On the day after the first fire there appeared in the midst of a mass of smouldering ruins, a pole surmounted by a board on which these words were writ large: 'All lost except wife, children and energy. Real estate agency, carried on as usual in the next shanty.' And the undismayed real estate agent is alive to tell the tale, a prosperous gentleman, who proudly exhibits the 'wife, children and energy' placard in his handsome office."

America was a land of marvels, to this Victorian man of the world as to the credulous Englishmen of the seventeenth century; but the marvels were the works of man, not of nature. Omaha, with its disproportionately wide streets, planned with a view to grandiose future development—"a baby city. . . cradled in armour big enough for Goliath of Gath"; the vast and rapidly expanding works, offices and foundries of the Union Pacific Railroad; the United States Mint in San Francisco equipped with machinery "unapproached in ingenuity and efficiency"; even the quack medicine advertisements which plastered the new walls of the remotest towns;—all these were impressive. The landscape was insignificant in comparison, something glimpsed between flashing telegraph poles; if any of the old sinister elemental forces still lurked in deserted places, hustling hearty Sala, with his dazzling white waistcoats, red tie, and redder nose, was not the man to be aware of them. Even his four and a half days' train journey from Omaha to San Francisco, through the most savagely magnificent scenery in America, seemed to him more remarkable for its comfort than its views: "The sights we saw during our passage of the snow-clad 'Rockies' were no doubt sublime. . . . My own opinion on the subject I shall reserve for some occasion when I do not run the risk of being classed with that most intolerable of nuisances, the Rocky Mountain bore." But in the absence of the sumptuous Pullman Hotel Cars, which did not run on this part of the line, what delectable fare was still procurable! His luncheon basket was stocked with half a cold roast turkey and half a dozen bottles of Extra Dry Verzenay; a buffalo tongue was purchased at a wayside station; and, having had the foresight to provide himself with a couple of "stoneware" jugs, he was supplied with constant hot white coffee, and when the negro attendant was unable to obtain hot milk at the stations, "the engine driver was so obliging as to warm the fluid under the boiler of the locomotive."

Sala's picture of America is still recognisable. The marble-fronted mansions have been dwarfed by skyscrapers, the decoration of lifts and Pullmans and hotel bedrooms has changed; the western towns

have far outgrown their Goliath armour, the comfort that impressed him now seems uncouth, the industrial undertakings puny. Yet in outline the picture is still the same : blazing luxury, mechanical innovations, hectic big business, headlong industrial development, sophisticated society, excellent food, the irrepressible energy and enthusiasm of the people—these things make up our usual conception of the United States.

Since the time of Sala many English travellers have enjoyed this America as much as he did ; revelled in its vitality, its daring, and most especially, in its riches. Englishmen originally expected America to be a land of gold ; after three centuries these expectations have been abundantly fulfilled. Wealth, far exceeding any mediæval fantasy, has become commonplace ; the gold and silver garden imagined by Raleigh would be economical compared with the pleasure palace of some modern American millionaires. Yet the disillusionment which pervades the writing of earlier travellers has not wholly disappeared. Wealth becomes vulgar and irritating, even criminal, to those who do not share it ; and in America it is possible to be poor, as poor as in modern or in Stuart England, as poor as in the first American colonies. America, the El Dorado of countless dreamers, displays, after all, merely this : the achievements of a capitalist country three hundred years old, possessed of ample territory and rich natural resources. English travellers are often amazed, but they are still, and quite unreasonably, disappointed.

## 8. THE PACIFIC

THE LAST great discovery of the great age of discovery was the Pacific, that vast expanse of water which was unexpectedly found to separate the New World from the East. First seen by Balboa from a mountain top in Darien in 1513, it was first navigated by Magellan in 1520, who sailing round the south of South America, reached the Spice Islands from the west and so made known to Europe the configuration of the world.

Although the Spaniards established a trade route across the Pacific soon after the middle of the sixteenth century,<sup>1</sup> this ocean, with an area larger than the whole land surface of the world, remained shrouded in mystery for another two hundred years. No one knew how many of those rich fantastic islands seen from time to time by roving seamen might lie concealed in it; the contours of New Zealand, and of a whole continent at its western extremity—Australia, were not fully ascertained until the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Long after the rest of the world had been explored at least in outline; when the coasts of Africa, Asia and America had become familiar to European travellers, wild conjectures were current concerning the Pacific. The belief in a great Southern Continent, stretching, perhaps, all the way round the world, had been inherited from classical geographers. Ptolemy had put such a land mass on the map, joining Asia and Africa. It had always been assumed that some land lay beyond what was regarded as the uninhabitable tropic zone; moreover it was argued that a continent must exist there to balance the land of the northern hemisphere. Although this theory of balance was not universally accepted, many people still believed in it at the beginning of the sixteenth century. When Magellan discovered his sea passage into the Pacific it was generally assumed that Tierra del Fuego formed part of the supposed continent, and during the ensuing years interest in the ancient geographical conception revived. Ortelius,<sup>2</sup> in a map drawn in 1570, shows a southern continent stretching all round the world, and including the land south of Magellan's Straits.

<sup>1</sup> In 1564 an expedition under Miguel Lopez de Legaspi sailed from Mexico to the Philippines, established a Spanish colony at Cebu, and the following year the return voyage across the Pacific was made for the first time. Thenceforth this route was regularly used.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham Ortelius (1527-1598). Born in Antwerp, German by origin, he was a great geographer of his age. In 1570 he published the first modern Atlas, "*Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*"; in 1575 he was appointed geographer to Philip II of Spain.

Curiously enough, few legends seem to have been attached to this unknown territory. Perhaps European imagination had exhausted itself in the creation of glittering oriental fantasies—the empire of Prester John, the rivers of precious stones—and wishful dreams of El Dorado in the west. Or perhaps the complete ignorance that prevailed concerning “Terra Incognita”—this land that no one had ever visited, from which came no travellers’ tales of gorgeous courts or gilded kings—paralysed speculation. When Francis Drake, in his voyage round the world in 1578, made his great discovery that Tierra del Fuego was no more than a group of islands, he described the elusive continent in the vaguest terms: “It hath been a dream through many ages that these islands have been a main, and that it hath been Terra Incognita, wherein many strange monsters lived.” “Strange monsters”: European imagination could conceive of nothing more definite with which to populate this enormous area; and though the belief in the Southern Continent, the last of the great geographical illusions, persisted for another two hundred years, nothing seems to have accrued to its nebulous contents. These centuries, after all, the seventeenth century—the age of inquiry, the eighteenth century—the age of reason, were not propitious to the spinning of legends. The Southern Continent, during the whole of its hypothetical existence, remained almost as vacant as the real continent that was eventually found, but much further to the south: Antarctica<sup>1</sup>: a desert of ice and snow, uninhabited by human beings or any land animal larger than an insect.

The history of the Southern Continent, is, therefore, the history of negative discoveries: during two centuries explorers found only sea where they had hoped for land, islands where they had hoped for a continent, until Cook having sailed round the world south of Africa, Australia and America and found nothing but ice and thick fog and barren rocky islands, finally disproved its existence.

Drake, the first of these disillusioning explorers, has been remembered, however, for achievements other than his demonstration of a great geographical error. A spectacular hero in an age of heroes, he was famous, in the eyes of his contemporaries as in the eyes of posterity, as an intrepid seaman, a patriotic looter of the Spaniards, and above all, as the first Englishman to sail round the world. *The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake*, compiled by his nephew from the notes of his chaplain on the voyage, Francis Fletcher, conveys in ringing language the glamour that already attached to him in his lifetime: “And therefore that valiant enterprise, accompanied with happy success, which that right rare and thrice worthy Captain, Francis Drake, achieved, in first turning up a furrow about the whole world, doth not only over-

<sup>1</sup> The continent was discovered gradually by the Antarctic explorers of the nineteenth century.



match the ancient Argonauts, but also outreacheth, in many respects, that noble mariner Magellanus, and by far surpasseth his crowned victory.<sup>1</sup> But hereof let posterity judge."

THE WORLD encompassed by SIR FRANCIS DRAKE,<sup>2</sup> *Being his next voyage to that of Nombre de Dios formerly imprinted; carefully collected out of the Notes of Master Francis Fletcher, Preacher in this employment and divers others his followers in the same; Offered now at last to publique view, both for the honour of the actor, but especially for the stirring up of heroick spirits, to benefit their Countrie, and eternize their names by like noble attempts.* (Pub. 1628.)

Drake was already a celebrated popular figure when he undertook this voyage. From his youth he had been engaged in that most honourable of Elizabethan pursuits: attacking and pillaging the Spaniards in the Atlantic and on the American coast. A cousin of Sir John Hawkins, who first broke the Spanish monopoly in the western world, he had accompanied him on a dramatic but unlucky slave-trading voyage,<sup>3</sup> in the course of which a number of Englishmen were treacherously massacred by the Spaniards in the port of Vera Cruz. This gave Drake the excuse for an expedition of revenge,<sup>4</sup> which carried him up and down the Spanish Main<sup>5</sup> raiding ports, seizing ships, vanishing to safe hiding places on uninhabited islands, and reappearing where he was least expected to create panic among the treasure-laden, poorly protected colonial Spaniards. A daring journey inland to intercept mule trains carrying gold and silver across the isthmus of Panama took him to the summit of the Cordillera range, where from the top of a high tree, he saw, for the first time, the Pacific Ocean. Immediately he was seized with the ambition to be the first Englishman to navigate that sea, to roam the western coasts of America where, unprepared for any attack, lay ports filled with the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru, and ships freighted with oriental treasures. In the words of Camden<sup>6</sup>: "he implored the Divine assistance that he might, at some time or

<sup>1</sup> Two of Magellan's fleet of five ships circumnavigated the world, but Magellan himself was killed in the Philippines in a fight with the islanders.

<sup>2</sup> *Sir Francis Drake* (c. 1545-1596). After his voyage round the world he distinguished himself in the war against Spain that then became official. In 1587 he performed his celebrated feat of burning a Spanish fleet in Cadiz harbour—"singeing the king of Spain's beard"—and he was Vice-Admiral of the English fleet at the time of the Armada.

<sup>3</sup> 1567-9.

<sup>4</sup> The Nombre de Dios expedition, 1572-3.

<sup>5</sup> The name given to that part of the coast between the Orinoco and the isthmus of Panama.

<sup>6</sup> William Camden (1551-1623), antiquary and historian.

other, sail thither and make a perfect discovery of the same: and hereunto he bound himself with a vow. From that time forward, his mind was pricked continually day and night to perform his vow."

A period of service under Essex on the Irish coast, and the awkward fact that Queen Elizabeth, who had never officially been at war with Spain, for a time resumed comparatively friendly relations with Philip II, delayed this undertaking for several years; but at last, in December 1577, Drake put to sea with a fleet of five ships, ostensibly on his way to the West Indies, but actually with the intention of attacking the Spaniards on the western coast of America and exploring new lands in the Pacific.

Although Drake, a hardy seaman, does not appear to have had the sophisticated tastes which impelled Raleigh to take with him on an Atlantic voyage a carved and gilded bed hung with green curtains, his ship, according to Francis Fletcher, was very luxuriously equipped. Like Sebastian Cabot, who directed the preparations for the first great English voyage of discovery—Willoughby and Chancellor's search for the North-east Passage—he realised the importance of being able to conciliate barbarous foreigners by means of music and sumptuous entertainment:

"These ships he manned with 164 able and sufficient men, and furnished them also with such plentiful provision of all things necessary, as so long and dangerous a voyage did seem to require. Neither had he omitted to make provision also for ornament and delight, carrying to this purpose with him, expert musicians, rich furniture (all the vessels for his table, yea, many belonging even to the cook-room being of pure silver), and divers shows of all sorts of curious workmanship, whereby the civility and magnificence of his native country might, amongst all nations whithersoever he should come, be the more respected."

The first part of the voyage was handicapped by troubles such as dogged all Elizabethan seamen: storms that delayed the departure from England; the kidnapping of one of the mariners by Moors on the African coast; "foul weather" in the Atlantic; "adverse winds, unwelcome storms," "less welcome calms" and terrifying thunder and lightning "in the bosom of the burning zone"; dense fogs and more storms off the coast of South America; and the usual crippling rows and intrigues. At Port St. Julien, an ominous spot on the South American coast where the Englishmen were greeted by the sight of a gibbet, set up, it was supposed, by Magellan for the execution of "some of his disobedient and rebellious company," Drake found it necessary to execute Thomas Doughty, one of his own gentlemen volunteers, on a charge of mutiny, witchcraft, conspiracy, disaffection and insubordination. This "bloody tragedy" caused considerable dissension among the crews, and historians are still taking sides in the obscure quarrel. Altogether Port St.

Julien was most unlucky: the native "Patagonian giants"<sup>1</sup> proved treacherous, and some "old and grim weather-beaten villains" among them murdered two of Drake's best men.

With only three ships left, Drake eventually reached the Cape of the Virgins, at the entrance to the straits. Here his adventures began in earnest. His own ship, the *Pelican*, was ceremoniously renamed the *Golden Hind*—the emblem of his protector Sir Christopher Hatton—and after a solemn sermon and prayers, the Englishmen entered these unknown waters that had only twice been navigated since the voyage of Magellan.

The passage was alarming enough. Changing winds and the confusing crooked channels between the many islands kept them in a constant state of anxiety; the formidable aspect of the frozen landscape added to their dismay:

"The mountains arise with such tops and spires into the air, and of so rare a height, as they may well be accounted amongst the wonders of the world; environed, as it were, with many regions of congealed clouds and frozen meteors," . . .

After seventeen nerve-wracking days Drake at last entered the Pacific, the long-desired South Sea. Now, after so many trials, he thought himself free to leave this menacing icy region where "the nipping cold, under so cruel and frowning a winter, had impaired the health of some of his men," and to sail into the treasure-logged tropical waters of western America. But it seemed as though the Almighty would not allow him the satisfaction of this triumph:

"For September 7, the second day after our entrance into the South Sea (called by some Mare pacificum, but proving to us to be rather Mare furiosum), God by a contrary wind and intolerable tempest, seemed to set himself against us, forcing us not only to alter our course and determination, but with great trouble, long time many dangers, hard escapes, and final separating of our fleet, to yield ourselves unto his will. Yea, such was the extremity of the tempest, that it appeared to us as if he had pronounced a sentence, not to stay his hand, nor to withdraw his judgment, till he had buried our bodies, and ships also, in the bottomless depth of the raging sea."

In this unparalleled storm the Englishmen were driven far to the south, where thick darkness descended on them. Here one of the ships, the *Marigold*, foundered within hearing-distance of the appalled crew of the *Golden Hind*:

"The day being come, the light of sun and land was taken from us

<sup>1</sup> Named by Magellan Patagonians—"Big Feet." Pigafetta, who accompanied him and recorded the voyage, magnified their large size to gigantic proportions.

so that here followed as it were a palpable darkness by the space of 56 days, without the sight of sun, moon, or stars, the moon only excepted, which we see in eclipse the space of a quarter of an hour or thereabouts. About which time, the storm being so outrageous and furious, the bark *Marigold*, wherein Edward Bright, one of the accusers of Thomas Doughty, was captain, with 28 souls, were swallowed up with the horrible and unmerciful waves, or rather mountains of the sea, which chanced in the second watch of the night, wherein myself and John Brewer, our trumpeter, being in watch, did hear their fearful cries, when the hand of God came upon them."

The other ship, the *Elizabeth*, likewise disappeared, and was thought to have met with the same fate as the *Marigold*, though actually her captain, Winter, succeeded in taking her back through the straits and so home to England. Left alone, the men of the *Golden Hind* saw no hope of saving themselves through their own exertions :

"For such was the present danger by forcing and continual flaws, that we were rather to look for present death than hope for any delivery, if Almighty God should not make way for us. The winds were such as if the bowels of the earth had set all at liberty, or as if all the clouds under heaven had been called together to lay their force upon that one place. The seas, which by nature and of themselves are heavy, and of a weighty substance, were rolled up from the depths, even from the roots of the rocks, as if it had been a scroll of parchment, which by the extremity of the heat runneth together ; and being aloft were carried in most strange manner and abundance as feathers or drifts of snow, by the violence of the winds, to water the exceeding tops of the high and lofty mountains. Our anchors, as false friends in such danger, gave over their holdfast, and as if it had been with horror of the thing, did shrink down and hide themselves in the miserable storm, committing the distressed ship and helpless men to the uncertain and rolling seas, which tossed them, like a ball in a racket. . . .

"For truly, it was more likely that the mountains should have been rent in sunder from the top to the bottom, and cast headlong, into the sea, by these unnatural winds, than that we, by any help or cunning of man should free the life of any one amongst us."

However, "the same God of mercy that delivered Jonas out of the whale's belly," miraculously contrived their escape ; not only this, but He brought them to the southernmost island of Tierra del Fuego, and thus allowed them, the first of European explorers, to behold the meeting of the Atlantic and Pacific seas :

"The uttermost cape or headland of all these islands, stands near



in 56 deg., without which there is no main nor island to be seen to the southward, but that the Atlantic Ocean and the South Sea, meet in a most large and free scope."

Richard Hawkins, son of the slave trader Sir John Hawkins, describing his own voyage through the straits in 1594, gives a more graphic account of Drake's great discovery :

"And moreover, he said, that standing about, when the wind changed, he was not well able to double the southernmost island, and so anchored under the lee of it; and going ashore, carried a compass with him, and seeking out the southernmost part of the island, cast himself down upon the uttermost point, grovelling, and so reached his body over it. Presently he embarked, and then recounted unto his people that he had been upon the southernmost known land in the world, and more further to the southwards upon it than any of them, yea or any man as yet known."

After this their troubles suddenly ended; indeed it seemed "as if God, all this while by His secret providence, had led us to make this discovery, which being made, according to His will, he stayed His hand, as pleased His majesty therein, and refreshed us as His servants." Without difficulty they shaped their course to the north-west, touched at some islands where they obtained a plentiful supply of fowl, and so came to the coast of Chile.

Here they found themselves transferred as though by magic from the elemental horror of the desolate south into a land affording all the amenities of a flourishing civilisation. At the first Spanish port they entered, the little settlement of Valparaiso, they found the warehouses full with Chilian wines, while the one ship in the harbour, grandiloquently known as *The Captain of Moriall*, or *Grand Captain of the South*, *Admiral to the Islands of Solomon*<sup>1</sup> yielded them a quantity of "fine gold of Baldinia," besides "a great cross of gold beset with emeralds, on which was nailed a god of the same metal."

If the storm in the south had seemed to them a trial ordained by God, a thing supernatural in its frightfulness, this voyage up the American coast was their miraculous reward. Much of Fletcher's narrative, like Raleigh's *Discovery of Guiana*, is enveloped in the atmosphere of a dream; but whereas Raleigh's dream is uniformly serene and glittering, Fletcher's is full of contrasts: the cataclysmic nightmare is transformed, by a sudden metamorphosis, into a happy golden world of ease and riches.

The Spanish colonies were utterly unprepared for Drake's attacks. The Straits of Magellan had been found too dangerous to be regularly used; Loaysa's expedition, six years after Magellan's, had sailed through

<sup>1</sup> The Solomon Islands had been discovered by Alvares de Mendana in 1568.

to the Moluccas<sup>1</sup>; but Simon de Alcazaba, on his way to take up his post as governor of southern Patagonia in 1535, had failed to navigate the straits, and when the Bishop of Plasencia five years later had sent an expedition of three ships to open this route to the ports of Chile and Peru, only one had reached the Pacific. The Spaniards were therefore completely taken by surprise when Drake appeared in these waters; the coast, which was nearly as wealthy as the mythical El Dorado, was barely fortified, the pompously-named treasure ships were poorly armed, men carried their plentiful riches without protection:

"As we sailed along, continually searching for fresh water, we came to a place called Tarapaca, and landing there we lighted on a Spaniard who lay asleep, and who had lying by him 13 bars of silver, weighing in all about 4000 Spanish ducats: we would not (could we have chosen) have awaked him from his nap: but seeing we, against our wills, did him that injury, we freed him of his charge, which otherwise perhaps would have kept him waking, and so left him to take out (if it pleased him) the other part of his sleep in more security."

There were a few skirmishes with the astonished Spaniards, but on the whole the Englishmen were able to go wherever they liked, to take whatever they pleased. At Arica, a town idyllically situated in a "most pleasant and fertile valley," they robbed some ships of forty bars of silver: on the way to Lima they ran into a barque freighted with linen "some of which we thought might stand us in some stead, and therefore we took it with us." No effort was made to resist them at Callao, the port of Lima, although thirty Spanish ships were anchored in the harbour; on the *Mighell Angel* they found fifteen hundred bars of silver, besides silks, linen, and a chest full of rials of plate.<sup>2</sup> All along the coast of Peru they were able to seize ships at will, pillaging wines, fruits, preserves and gold. Near Cape Francisco, at the entrance to the bay of Panama, they had the luck to meet the *Cacafuego*, "the great glory of the South Sea," a ship loaded with bullion—"the cause of her heavy and slow sailing"—from which they looted a quantity of pearls and precious stones, eighty pounds' weight of gold, thirteen chests of rials and plate, and no less than twenty-six tons of silver.

Pausing to rest after this tremendous haul on the "Island of Caines,"<sup>3</sup> they were amazed by an event in keeping with their many exotic experiences: a harmless but impressive earthquake. In these waters they also met with a ship carrying oriental rarities, and a particularly gorgeous jewelled object<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Commanded by Garcia Jofre de Loaysa.

<sup>2</sup> Rials: Spanish silver coins (see Asia). Plate: Silver.

<sup>3</sup> The island of Cano.

<sup>4</sup> According to another account, written by a Portuguese pilot, Nuno da Silvo, whom Drake had taken prisoner at the Cape Verde Islands, and released at Gautulco, Drake also found on this ship, which was bound for Panama and

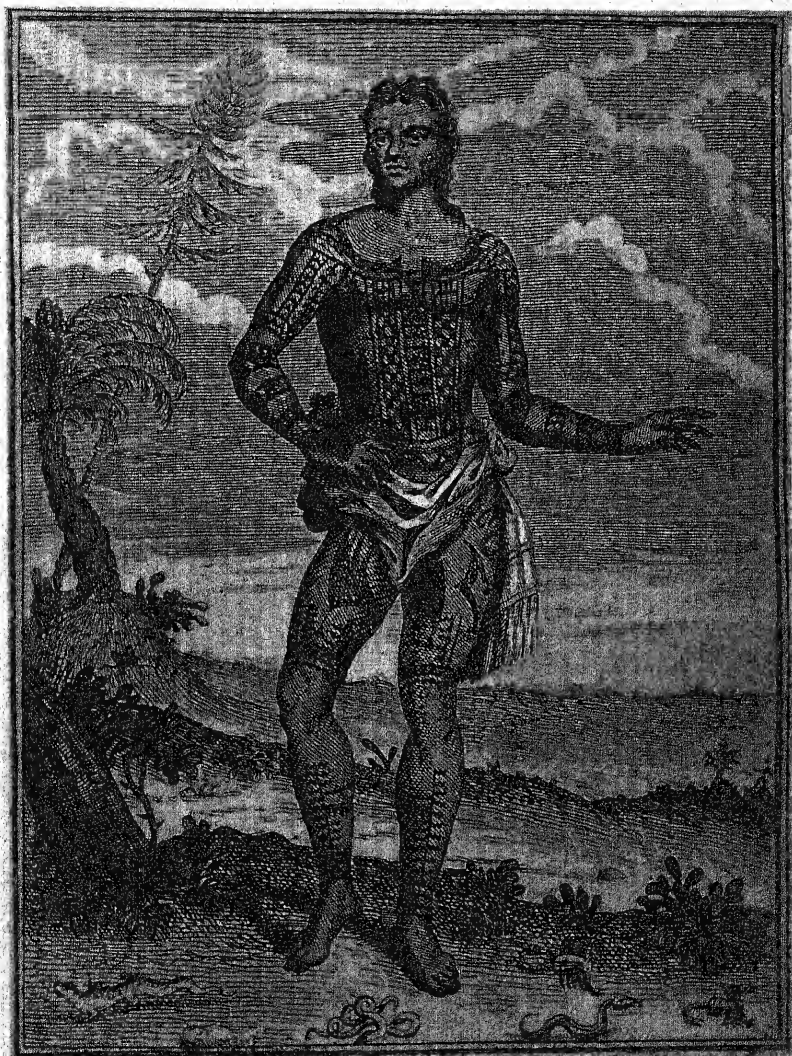
"While we abode in this place, we felt a very terrible earthquake, the force whereof was such that our ship and pinnace, riding very near as English mile from the shore, were shaken and did quiver as if it had been laid on dry land: we found here many good commodities which we wanted, as fish, fresh water, wood, etc., besides alargatoes, monkeys, and the like; and in our journey hither we met with one ship more (the last we met with in all these coasts), laden with linen, China silk and China dishes, amongst which we found also a fualcon of gold, handsomely wrought, with a great emerald set in the breast of it."

After relieving the port of Gatulco of some more jewels, and "a certain pot (of about a bushel in bigness)" full of rials of plate, sated with plunder, they felt ready to leave the profitable coasts of America. The question now arose of how they were to bring their loot-laden ship home to England. Not unnaturally, everyone wanted to avoid the ghastly passage of the Straits of Magellan, now doubly perilous, for without doubt Spanish ships would be waiting there to intercept them. The alternative plan, suggested by Drake, and readily accepted by his crew, was no less than that they should return by way of the North-west Passage, thus crowning their successes by another major geographical discovery. To none of them, apparently, did it occur that such a voyage might be even more arduous than returning the way they had come. Not until much later, indeed not until Cook's discoveries at the end of the eighteenth century, was it realised that the only North-west Passage lay in the Arctic. The early colonisation of Virginia was much hampered by futile searches for a creek or inlet, which, so the settlers imagined, would lead them across the continent and into the Pacific.

Drake sailed as far north as the coast of Oregon before the "pinching and biting air," icy squalls, and "most vile, thick and stinking fogs"—phenomena from which he had already suffered too much—induced him to give up his attempt to find the Passage. Such weather, in these regions and in the month of July, is hard to explain unless Providence had again interposed in his favour, sending this freak winter in order to save him from the catastrophic hardships he would no doubt have endured searching for the Passage further north.

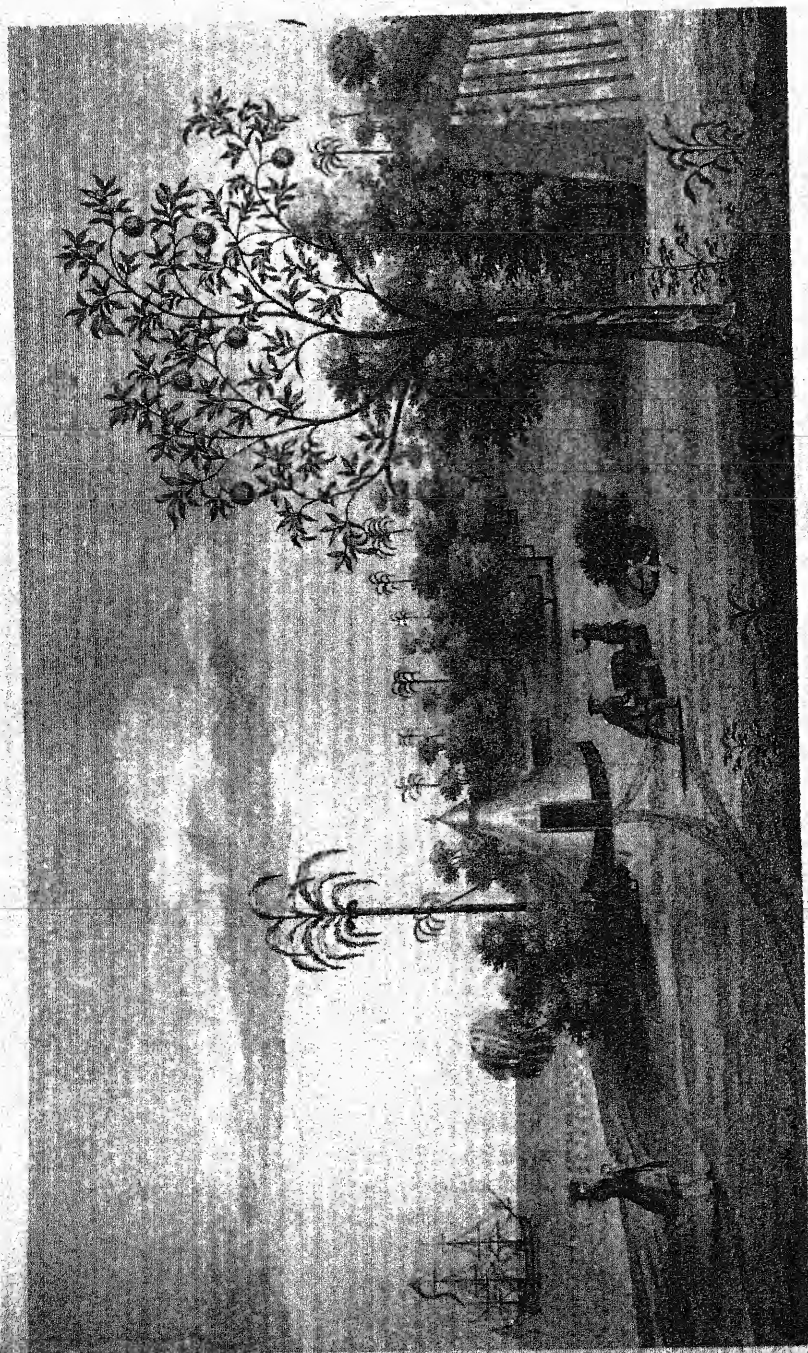
This pleasant coast of America seemed to the Englishmen a wilderness as hopeless as Tierra del Fuego:

"Besides, how unhandsome and deformed appeared the face of the earth itself! shewing trees without leaves, and the ground without then for the East, letters from the King of Spain to the governor of the Philippines, and maps and sailing charts of the Pacific. These invaluable documents may have persuaded Drake to return by way of the Moluccas. American historians, notably Henry R. Wagner, the leading authority on Drake's voyage, have found evidence to suggest that Drake had planned to circumnavigate the world before leaving England, and that he never intended to return by the North-west Passage.



The painted prince Jeoly.  
*From the contemporary engraving described by Dampier. By courtesy of the  
British Museum.*





View of the Island of Tenian visited by Captain Anson.  
*From a contemporary engraving.*

greenness in these months of June and July. The poor birds and fowls not daring (as we had great experience to observe it), not daring so much as once to arise from their nests after the first egg laid, till it, with the rest, be hatched and brought to some strength of nature able to help itself."

Turning south again, they came to anchor in "a convenient and fit harbour," probably in what is now San Francisco Bay, where they stopped to overhaul the ship in preparation for the unpredictable voyage across the Pacific, which they now judged to be the best course open to them. Glamorous California impressed them little better than Oregon. Although the "infinite" "company" of "very large and fat deer" suggested that the country might be "stored with many blessings fit for the use of man," the inhabitants had taken no advantage of them. Creeping out of low earthen huts, miserable naked savages swarmed round the fort that Drake had built for the protection of his men on shore. The fort proved superfluous, for these Californians, unlike the Patagonian giants, were pathetically servile: "standing, when they drew near, as men ravished in their minds, with the sight of such things as they never had seen or heard of before that time: their errand being rather with submission and fear to worship us as Gods, than to have any war with us as mortal men."

Their adoration was in fact embarrassing. Day after day they arrived in solemn procession, their faces horridly painted, to offer gifts, or rather sacrifices, to the astonished Elizabethan sailors, tearing their own flesh with hideous screeches and moans, dashing themselves against "hard stones, knobby hillocks, stocks of wood and pricking bushes." To end this "bloody sacrifice" Drake ordered his company to kneel and pray, in the hope of convincing them "that the God whom we did serve, and whom they ought to worship, was above": but though they listened enthusiastically to bible readings and psalm singing, they persisted in regarding Drake as a divinity. Almost against his will he found himself a king: with long, "tedious" and incomprehensible orations, the chief, the great "Hioh," begged him to accept the country and become its ruler; with ceremonial songs and dances, and the usual shrieking and flesh-tearing, chains of burnished bone were hung around his neck, and finally a crown, made of coloured feathers "very artificially placed, and of a formal fashion," was set upon his head.

Drake accordingly took possession of the country in the name of Queen Elizabeth, calling it New Albion, because its white cliffs reminded him of the cliffs of Dover. Before leaving he nailed "to a great and firm post" a brass plate on which he engraved a notice stating that he had taken possession of the country in June 1579, at the request

of its King and people, in the name of Queen Elizabeth and her successors. An English sixpence, bearing the Queen's "picture and arms," was displayed in a hole made through the plate.

It had always been assumed that this plate was forever lost, until in 1936 a Mr. Beryl Shinn picked up a piece of metal not far from San Rafael, in San Francisco Bay, which he thought might serve to repair his car. A month later, when he was about to use it for this purpose, he noticed some inscription on it. The metal was cleaned, and proved, beyond any reasonable doubt, to be the most romantic of modern historical discoveries; nothing less than Drake's original plate of brass, bearing the words recorded in *The World Encompassed*, and having a hole in it exactly fitting an English Elizabethan sixpence! It can now be seen in the University of California.<sup>1</sup>

Having added California to the British empire, Drake set sail for the East. His good fortune held. Without incident he crossed the Pacific in just over two months, a remarkably lucky voyage, considering the sickness, hunger and death that had attended the first Spanish expeditions to the Moluccas, and the disastrous adventures that befell Commodore Anson more than a century and a half later. Drake's crossing was so uneventful that Fletcher dismisses it in a single sentence :

"And so having nothing in our view but air and sea, without sight of land for the space of 68 days together, we continued our course through the main ocean, till September 30 following, on which day we fell in ken of certain islands, lying about 80 degrees northward of the line."

Sailing within sight of land, they passed these islands, where they were much bothered by the thieving of the natives who came out in their canoes to trade, coasted the Philippines, and on the third of November, 1579, they sighted at last the famous Spice Islands, the Moluccas. Drake had planned to go to Tidore, but the Sultan of Ternate sent him a message warning him that the Portuguese controlled that island, and entreating him to visit his own island, from which he had recently ejected them. Drake accepted the invitation, at the same time requesting permission to trade, and sending a handsome velvet cloak as a present. In reply the Sultan not only granted him trading facilities but declared that he desired to place himself under the protection of Queen Elizabeth, sending a ring in token of his good faith. By this exchange of courtesies Drake had in fact secured for England control of part of the Spice Islands, and the monopoly in those territories of the most coveted trade in the world.

The Englishmen now suddenly found themselves back in the civilised world of alliances and commerce and international rivalry; they had

<sup>1</sup> See the fascinating book *Drake's Plate of Brass*, by Herbert E. Bolton and Douglas S. Watson, published by the California Historical Society, 1937.

experienced another of the amazing contrasts of this voyage by passing straight from the shrivelling barbarism of North America into a scene of oriental pomp, ceremony and intrigue. The Sultan of Ternate was only a very small prince in comparison with the great oriental potentates, but to these Elizabethan Englishmen, to whom the East was still unknown, his little court, with its dim reflections of the magnificence of China, India, Persia, and far-away Turkey, was impressive enough. "The manner of his coming," writes Fletcher, "as it was princely, so truly it seemed to us very strange and marvellous": It was indeed an honour that the Sultan should himself have visited the English ship, accompanied by his councillors, formally dressed in "white lawn, or cloth of Calicut." Drake returned the compliment to the best of his ability, firing guns to the accompaniment of trumpets and musical instruments, a greeting which was much to the taste of this pleasure-loving but not very highly cultured prince:

" . . . our ordinance thundered, which we mixed with great store of small shot, among which sounding our trumpets and other instruments of music, both of still and loud noise; wherewith he was so much delighted, that requesting our music to come unto the boat, he joined his canoe to the same, and was towed at least a whole hour together, with the boat at the stern of our ship."

The next day there was a grand reception for the Englishmen on shore, under a canopy of "cloth of Arras" erected near the royal castle. The numerous attendants of the Sultan made a fine effect, particularly "four ancient comely hoar-headed men, clothed in red down to the ground, but attired on their heads not much unlike the Turks; these they call Romans, or strangers." . . . Two authentic Turks, an Italian and a Spaniard were employed at this tiny international capital. The Sultan himself was an imposing figure with his "low voice" and "kingly demeanour"; his robes from the waist downwards was "all cloth of gold," and he was suitably accoutred with diamonds, turquoises, an emerald, a ruby, and a head-dress of plaited gold. By his side stood a page, fanning him with a fan studded with sapphires.

Drake, who seems to have been as self-assured in the role of ambassador as in that of seaman, explorer, king or god, for certain reasons considered it beneath his dignity to leave his ship for this ceremony. He spent, however, a most interesting time on board, for he received a visit from another of the foreigners residing at Ternate, a Chinese, exiled from his country for some crime, who claimed to belong to the royal family, presumably the Mings. This "goodly gentleman," who was distinguished by his elegant manners—"his carriage the most respective and full of discreet behaviour that ever we had seen"—through his interpreter discoursed at length about China, "one of the most ancient,



mightiest, and richest kingdoms in the world "; gave an enticing account, which must have fascinated Drake whose imagination had no doubt already been stirred by the old exciting legends of Cathay, of "the number, stateliness and riches of its cities," and "with what abundance of men, victuals, munition, and all manner of necessary and delightful things they were stored with." Artillery, he told Drake, much superior to that of Europe, guns "so perfectly made that they would hit a shilling" had been used in China more than two thousand years ago. He finally offered to conduct Drake there himself; the wind, he added, would "shortly serve very fitly to carry him thither."

Had Drake accepted this invitation, he might perhaps have added to his extraordinary achievements by being the first known Englishman to have seen China; and that enchantingly vivid writer Francis Fletcher might have delighted posterity with a description of the country at this period when it was almost unknown to Europeans. But Drake, a practical if supremely audacious commander, decided, most regrettably for us, to return to England without further delay. After only four days at Ternate, having obtained provisions and savoured a faint perfume of the intoxicating East, the Englishmen set sail for home.

But before they could begin their long voyage, it was necessary to find some place where they could rest after their many strains and adventures, and overhaul their ship. An uninhabited island south of Celebes was chosen, which proved ideally suited for the purpose; a fruitful, healthy island, the magical beauty of which was in keeping with the many strange unearthly scenes, both sinister and alluring, which they had encountered in this voyage round the world:

"The whole island is a through grown wood, the trees for the most part are of large and high stature, very straight and clean without boughs, save only in the very top. The leaves whereof are not much unlike our brooms in England. Among these trees, night by night, did shew themselves an infinite swarm of fiery-seeming-worms flying in the air, whose bodies (no bigger than an ordinary fly) did make a shew, and give such light as if every twig on every tree had been a lighted candle, or as if that place had been the starry sphere."

They endured one more trial, perhaps their worst, when, soon after leaving this island, the ship struck some "hard and pinching rocks." For a time their position seemed hopeless; in despair, they fell on their knees in prayer, "and so preparing as it were our necks unto the block, we every minute expected the final stroke to be given unto us." But the ship was eventually refloated, and after an anxious voyage through many shoals and islands, they safely reached Java, where they were warmly welcomed by the Rajah, who presented Drake with a variety of "very costly silks."

After this they were exceptionally fortunate : without encountering any gales or calms such as harassed James Lancaster,<sup>1</sup> who, eleven years later, was the first Englishman to sail into these waters from the opposite direction, they rounded the Cape of Good Hope, "having very fair weather," touched at Sierra Leone and the Canaries, and at last, "with joyful minds and thankful hearts to God," reached Plymouth :

... "after we had spent two years ten months and some few odd days in seeing the wonders of the Lord in the deep, in discovering so many admirable things, in going through with so many strange adventures, in escaping out of so many dangers, and overcoming so many difficulties in this our encompassing of this nether globe, and passing round about the world, which we have related."

Drake had brought home treasure which has been valued at half a million pounds, as much as was then the whole revenue of the Crown for a year. He was the first commander to have circumnavigated the world—for Magellan had died during his voyage—the first Englishman to have sailed the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and round the Cape of Good Hope. He had made two important, if negative geographical discoveries : he had shown that Tierra del Fuego was no part of a southern continent, and he had shown that the North-west Passage lay further to the north than had been supposed. He had jostled the Spaniards in the New World, he had snatched valuable trading privileges from the Portuguese in the East,<sup>2</sup> and he had added California to the English Empire. It might be thought that such a man would have received a tremendous official welcome on reaching home. Unfortunately, at the time of his arrival, September 1580, Queen Elizabeth, alarmed by Philip II's annexation of Portugal,<sup>3</sup> and his support of a formidable rebellion in Ireland, was making one of her periodical attempts to conciliate her rival. The appearance of Drake, "the master thief of the unknown world," was therefore embarrassing : to recognise him as a hero would amount to declaring herself the enemy of Spain. It was not until April of the following year that she decided to take this historic step, but then she acted more than graciously. Going herself to Deptford, where the *Golden Hind* was at anchor, she knighted Drake on board his

<sup>1</sup> James Lancaster first sailed round the Cape into the Indian Ocean in 1591, a disastrous voyage (see Asia).

<sup>2</sup> In 1604 the East India Company sent an expedition to the Moluccas—the Company's second voyage—under the command of Henry Middleton, who had sailed with Lancaster on the first voyage of the Company to Achin (see Asia). But it was already too late for England to take advantage of the concessions offered to Drake, for the Dutch, who later gained control of the whole island group, were already in the Moluccas rivalling the Portuguese. Middleton was, however, warmly welcomed at the little island of Manipa by the King who had received Drake at Ternate, and who asked for him.

<sup>3</sup> In 1580.

own vessel. On her orders, the ship was preserved as a monument to his achievements; later, a chair was made out of the timbers and presented by Charles II to Oxford University. It can still be seen in the Bodleian Library.

Drake had shown where the imagined Southern Continent was not to be found; he had also shown where the Spaniards could be plundered, and this to the greedy aggressive Englishmen of the following generations was much the more interesting discovery. The fact that the Spanish trade route lay across the central part of the Pacific retarded for a long time the exploration of its southern area. Neither the treasure-laden Spanish galleons, nor the English ships that sought to capture them, had occasion to navigate any part of the vast ocean save the south American coasts and the route between Mexico and Manila. Meanwhile Terra Incognita, the "opposite world" of ancient geographers, remained as mysterious as ever.

It is true that some progress was made in tracing the coastline of Australia—Terra Australis—then identified with the Southern Continent; but for commercial reasons, which at that period were paramount, these discoveries were neither pursued with energy nor widely advertised. Modern research has brought to light certain sixteenth-century maps which indicate that the Portuguese probably discovered Australia before the time of Drake's voyage<sup>1</sup>; but in accordance with their policy of concealing geographical knowledge from their mercantile rivals, they allowed no records of these voyages to be published. On the other hand they made no use of their discovery, for there was little inducement to establish settlements on this barbarous-looking coast which provided nothing for trade. The Dutch, who visited the northern and western coasts of Australia, which they named New Holland, fairly frequently during the seventeenth century, likewise did nothing more with it than mark its coastline on their maps because they judged that it was of no value to the Dutch East India Company. The first Englishman to visit Australia, William Dampier, who landed on the northern coast in 1686, and explored part of the western coast thirteen years later, wrote such uninviting reports of the country that his countrymen were deterred from making any further investigations there for more than sixty years. The profitable commerce with the East in fact deadened curiosity and limited knowledge; Europeans were content to remain in ignorance of a whole new continent for more than two centuries because it produced no marketable merchandise. Not until the latter part of the eighteenth century did one of the imperialist

<sup>1</sup> See R. J. Mayor's introduction to *Early Voyages to terra Australis*. It has also been claimed that a Frenchman, Binot Paulmier de Gonneville who made a voyage of discovery in 1503 was the first to have discovered Australia. This however cannot be proved; the land he reached may well have been Madagascar.

nations—England—at last bother to claim this vacant and apparently unaffording land.

*Captain William Dampier's Voyage Round the Terrestrial Globe. (Pub. 1697.)*

Dampier,<sup>1</sup> although an admirable seaman and a keen observer, had not the qualities that make a great explorer. He was incapable of the controlled and sustained determination that enabled Drake to sail round the world without deviating from his course. Dampier would never have refused the invitation to visit China, and he would probably have lingered on the coast of South America until his men had become depraved by easy plunder and the Spaniards had gathered strength to destroy them. Easily attracted by new schemes, Dampier seldom had the force of character to make them successful; over and over again he embarked on some undertaking likely to make his fortune, only to abandon it before it was half completed.

Everything interested him for a time, and nothing for very long. Although he had the seventeenth-century curiosity concerning plants and animals, people and their customs, his observations, even more than those of most travellers of his period, are unselected, an overpowering shapeless mass of information. He was quite without that calculating passion for knowledge that inspired Cook, month after month in hardship and danger, to map and chart, with scrupulous accuracy, the unappealing coasts of Australia and New Zealand. Irresolute and low-spirited, this man with the long melancholy face, bold nose and weak chin, was poorly qualified, in spite of his remarkable seamanship, to be the explorer of Australia.

No doubt his life before the Admiralty made him an official explorer had unfitted him for any such work. Dampier had spent about eight years as a buccaneer, and no occupation, if it deserves the name, can have been more demoralising. Characteristically, he had adopted it on impulse. His parents, respectable tenant farmers, had given him a sound education, intending him for a trade. But his restless disposition had wrecked their plans for his career, and indeed, his own: at the age of seventeen he had gone to sea; six years later, after voyages to Newfoundland and Bantam, and some service in the Dutch War in 1673, he had thrown up the life of a sailor to manage a friend's plantation in Jamaica.

It would have been against his nature for him to have stuck to this

<sup>1</sup> *William Dampier* (1651-1715), was born at East Coker, the home, also, of the ancestors of T. S. Eliot. Although his career was unfortunate, there is no evidence to prove that, as has sometimes been said, he died in extreme poverty.



very long. The Caribbean was then a wealthy, turbulent region which offered innumerable enticing prospects to an enterprising young man. Now that Spain was no longer a formidable power, adventurers from all over Europe flocked to the New World to prey upon her colonies. The law forbidding the Spanish colonists to buy from foreigners was openly flouted; English West Indian planters traded profitably and regularly with the Main. In the Campeché, on the Gulf of Mexico, gangs of log-wood cutters, mostly English, concealed in the forests, made an illegal living by robbing the Spaniards of their trees, occasionally descending with fire and sword on neighbouring Indian villages. Meanwhile bolder brigands, English, French, Portuguese and Dutch, banded together to pillage Spanish ships and settlements. These men, the celebrated buccaneers,<sup>1</sup> had begun by capturing ships and raiding ports for food; but by the middle of the seventeenth century they had become a terrifying force, the savage and sinister "Brotherhood of the Coast," noted for sadism, debauchery, and outbreaks of religious fervour. The best defended ports, even towns far inland, fell before their furious attacks, when they would murder and torture the inhabitants—nuns, priests, women and children alike, and then set fire to the houses before they carried away their loot, which they invariably squandered in wild orgies of drinking.

Although England was then officially at peace with Spain, the West Indian settlers, who had been painfully building up their colonies since their desperate struggle in the days of Sir Henry Colt,<sup>2</sup> had no scruples in making use of these merciless lawless seamen. Indeed, the colony of Jamaica, captured from the Spaniards in 1655, welcomed them as protectors, and thenceforth Port Royal became their headquarters, rather than the uninhabited islands where they had formerly lurked between raids. Henry Morgan, the most reckless and ruthless of all the buccaneers, actually carried a commission from the governor of Jamaica<sup>3</sup> when in 1671 he crossed the isthmus of Darien, and captured, looted and burned the city of Panama.<sup>4</sup> This exploit was followed by

<sup>1</sup> The buccaneers were originally a band of free lance traders established on the island of Hispaniola, which was then barely inhabited, for the cruelty of the Spaniards had almost exterminated the Indian population, and most of the Spanish settlers had moved to the mainland. Great herds of cattle and pigs had been left behind, which roamed wild on the island, and the remaining native inhabitants were skilled in preserving their meat without the use of salt by curing it in the sun and smoking it over a fire of green wood. This process was called bucaning—hence the name of buccaneer. At first the buccaneers made their living by hunting the wild cattle and pigs, bucaning the meat and selling it to passing ships. But when the Spaniards drove them from the island they took to piracy, making their headquarters on Tortuga.

<sup>2</sup> See West Africa and the West Indies.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Thomas Modyford.

<sup>4</sup> The destruction of Panama was a serious incident, particularly since a treaty had recently been signed between England and Spain "restraining depredations and establishing peace" in the New World. The Spanish government protested

other excursions into the Pacific, where the buccaneers ravaged the coast that had yielded Drake such rich prizes a century before. From time to time, of course, the home government became alarmed by their depredations, but no serious effort was made to suppress them; as in the time of Elizabeth, no one was disposed to condemn adventurers, however disreputable, who served the interests of the empire.

For a few years Dampier divided his time impartially between respectable trading, less respectable log-wood cutting, and buccaneering; finally, without conviction, almost, it seems, by mistake, he threw in his lot with the buccaneers. At the end of 1679 he was in Jamaica preparing to go to Campeché for log-wood cutting; instead, he suddenly decided to join a Mr. Hobby on a trading expedition to the Mosquitoe Indians of Central America. But while the ship was still at anchor off Jamaica all poor Mr. Hobby's men deserted to the fleet of some buccaneers who happened to be there planning a grand new enterprise. After hesitating for several days, Dampier was unable to resist joining them; as he helplessly admits:

"Mr. Hobby's men all left him to go with them, beside myself; and being thus left alone, after three or four days with Mr. Hobby, I was the more easily persuaded to go with them."

Thus, after three times changing his mind, Dampier had stumbled into making one of the major decisions of his life.

Dampier was engaged as a foremast hand. In spite of his great experience he never gained a position of authority during all the eight years he spent with the buccaneers, a fact which suggests that he was by no means cut out to be a leader. Certainly it should have been easy for him to become a captain, for the story of these voyages is one of continual rows and mutinies, of men deserting in captured ships to start independent expeditions, of men left on barbarous shores to shift for themselves as best they could. Just over a year after joining the buccaneers Dampier found himself in such an unenviable position, being stranded on the Pacific shore of the isthmus of Panama with forty-six companions.

The adventures that brought him there are too complicated and too tedious to be related in detail. The glamorous period of the buccaneers had passed by the time that Dampier joined their ranks; the men with whom he associated were a shabby crowd compared with the fiendish villains of Morgan's day. Although they had amazing powers of endurance, although they unflinchingly faced hunger and thirst and storms, interminable voyages and gruelling tramps through swamps and jungles, to Charles II, and Morgan was brought home to stand trial for piracy. The results of this trial were that he was knighted by the King and sent back to Jamaica as Deputy Governor of the island. Morgan filled this post satisfactorily, became a wealthy planter and respected citizen and held various responsible positions in Jamaica until his death.

they lacked the fire and dash of earlier generations of English pirates. They seldom attacked a town unless it was already abandoned ; but this frequently happened, the Spaniards being even more cowardly. If they had the joy of burning and sacking a port it was nearly always because the enemy troops had retired to watch the raid from an adjacent hill. Plundering the Spaniards, once a noble patriotic duty demanding breakneck courage in the face of enormous odds, had become little more than a sordid gangster method of making a living. The Dutch, after all, were now England's rivals on the seas ; there was little glory in attacking the decadent Spanish colonists.

Dampier's party, in imitation of the great Morgan, had crossed the isthmus to the Pacific by sailing down a river in canoes, but then, after enduring the frightful hardships of this journey, had lacked the resolution to attack Panama as they had planned. Instead, they had captured some ships in the harbour, in one of which they had cruised for a time off the Pacific coast ; but their various exploits had not been very profitable, and at the sight of some Spanish men-of-war they had bolted from Juan Fernandez with undignified haste, leaving a servant, a Mosquitoe Indian, stranded on this uninhabited island. Soon afterwards they had made an unsuccessful attack on Arica ; their captain had been shot dead fighting in the streets, and as a climax to a series of disagreements, Dampier and others of the same faction had been left on the coast of the isthmus to find their own way back to the Caribbean. Several died, and others had to be left behind on the terrible overland march that followed. Dampier, however, was one of those who accomplished the journey without accident. He was always at his best in such appalling situations ; indeed he seems to have liked hardship, or at least, to have been fatally attracted by it.

Most men would have taken a rest from piracy after such adventures, but Dampier, on reaching the Caribbean, at once joined some French buccaneers, roamed up and down the Spanish Main plundering not very valuable cargoes, and finally escaped with a few friends in a prize vessel to Virginia. Here he spent more than a year, and it is much to be regretted that he recorded nothing of this period in his journal, for it would be interesting to have an account of the colony in this obscure phase of its history by so careful an observer as Dampier. He merely says that "troubles" befell him during his stay there—Dampier was seldom free from them in any part of the world—and it was no doubt because of these unspecified misfortunes that when, early in 1683, some of his old friends turned up with a well-armed vessel, the *Revenge*, he readily joined them on an expedition to the Pacific. This was the beginning of his voyage round the world, his chief claim to fame.

After touching at Sherboro River on the west coast of Africa, adverse winds prevented them from entering the Straits of Magellan, but they rounded Cape Horn without much difficulty, and sailing north,

stopped at Juan Fernandez to look for the Indian who had been left there three years earlier. The man was alive to welcome them with a feast of goat's meat cooked with cabbage ; alone on the island, he had supported himself all this time by hunting and fishing. His adventures, which were later made known to the world through Dampier's popular journal, captured the imagination of the period. By a curious coincidence a Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk, was left stranded on the same island just over twenty years later in the course of another of Dampier's expeditions.<sup>1</sup> He also managed to keep himself alive until he was rescued, which was not until four years had elapsed. These two romantic stories were the inspiration of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, perhaps the only thing of value that ever resulted from the vicissitudes of the buccaneers.

All up the coasts of Chile and Peru Dampier and his associates, together with another shipload of buccaneers they had met off Cape Horn, carried out their customary depredations. Cargo after cargo was seized, none of them, however, containing anything of much value ; various half-hearted land attacks were equally unremunerative. The capture of ships freighted with quinces, marmalade, wine, or a mule on its way to the President of Panama, raids on shore to seize nothing more gorgeous than cattle for dinner—all this seems a caricature of Drake's flamboyant exploits.

Meanwhile Dampier, who relates these incidents in the matter-of-fact manner of a hardened outlaw, filled his spare time observing nature with a thoroughness and accuracy which perhaps compensated him a little for his slipshod mode of life. The sapadillo-tree, the avogato pear, the prickly-pear, the cat-fish, the jew-fish, the hog-plumb-tree—these strange things and many others are described in painstaking detail.

The hog-plumb-tree, for instance, " is as big as our largest plumb-tree : the leaf is of a dark green colour, and as broad as the leaf of a plumb-tree ; but they are shaped like the hawthorn leaf. The trees are very brittle wood ; the fruit is oval, and as big as a small Horse-plumb. It is at first very green, but when it is ripe, one side is yellow, the other red. It hath a great stone, and but little substance about it : The fruit is pleasant enough ; but I do not remember that I ever saw one thoroughly ripe, that had not a maggot or two in it."

How much happier Dampier might have been as a scientist and

<sup>1</sup> In 1703-1707, Dampier commanded an expedition of two ships, privateers sent by the British government to attack the Spaniards in the Pacific during the War of Succession. His operations were therefore a respectable form of buccaneering. The expedition, in the course of which Selkirk was stranded on Juan Fernandez and Dampier again sailed round the world, was, however, a failure, and being Dampier's next voyage after his unlucky attempt to explore Australia, confirmed his inability to command. In 1708-1711 he sailed to the Pacific again as pilot to Woodes Rogers ; on this successful voyage, which took Dampier round the world for the third time, Selkirk was rescued.



physician, like Sir Hans Sloane, than dragging wearily about the world with a gang of sloppy brigands !

At the island of La Plata, said to have been given this name by the Spaniards in memory of Drake, who is supposed to have transhipped the cargo of the captured *Cacafuego* while anchored off the island, Dampier's band was joined by a Captain Swan and his crew in a vessel named the *Cygnnet*. The ship had originally been freighted with cargo for a respectable trading voyage to the Pacific, but the crew, meeting some pirates at Nicoya, on the coast of Central America, had been so captivated by their company that they had brought them on board and persuaded their captain to turn buccancer. On meeting Dampier's party Swan had prepared for coming adventures by throwing most of the cargo overboard, so that the ship might be unencumbered in time of battle :

" . . . therefore he by the consent of the supercargoes, got all his goods on deck, and sold to anyone that would buy on trust ; and the rest was thrown overboard into the sea, except fine goods, as silks, muslins, stockings, etc., and except the iron, whereof he had a good quantity, both wrought and in bars, this was saved for ballast."

The transformation from merchant to pirate being completed, the combined parties, reinforced with some English and French buccaneers picked up on the isthmus of Panama, prepared to do something sensational. They were now a formidable-looking company, consisting of six ships, several barques, and altogether nine hundred and sixty men. Their plan was to intercept the Plate Fleet from Lima, which, so they had learned from despatches found on a captured vessel, would shortly be sailing. But the reader of Dampier's journal may wait in vain for an account of the bloody battle and tremendous haul that should have ensued. As usual, everything was bungled, and the buccaneers found themselves flying in confusion from the Spanish fleet. Luckily the Spaniards were also cowardly, and refrained from doing them any damage.

Disgusted by this failure, the buccaneers dispersed. Dampier transferred himself to Swan's vessel, because he had heard that Swan contemplated going to the East Indies, and, inevitably, the prospect of a change of scene filled him with unjustified optimism. After an unprofitable cruise off the coast of Mexico, they set sail for the East in March 1686. Swan had some difficulty in persuading his men to undertake this voyage, many of them being unable to believe that it was possible to reach the East by sailing westwards. As always, the information of the working classes lagged many years behind the development of the world's knowledge ; in this instance, more than a century and a half :

"Many were well pleased with the voyage; but some thought, such was their ignorance, that he would carry them out of the world; for about two-thirds of our men did not think there was any such way to be found; but at last he gained their consents."

Others were disturbed, with better reason, by their small supply of provisions; but Swan reassured them by telling them, inaccurately, that both Drake and Sir Thomas Cavendish had crossed the Pacific in less than fifty days.<sup>1</sup>

They were, however, less fortunate than either of these navigators. Their provisions had almost run out when Guam mercifully appeared on the skyline, and some of the men had contemplated eating Swan, Dampier and the others who had favoured the voyage:

"It was well for Captain Swan that we got sight of it before our provision was spent, of which we had but enough for three days more; for, as I was afterwards informed, the men had contrived first to kill Captain Swan and eat him when the victuals was gone, and after him all of us who were accessory in promoting the undertaking this voyage. This made Captain Swan say to me after our arrival at Guam, 'Ah! Dampier, you would have made them but a poor meal'; for I was as lean as the captain was lusty and fleshy."

From Guam they went to Mindanao in the Philippines, where they were well received by the Sultan of the district, who, observes Dampier, was "but a poor prince," given to borrowing money from every passing stranger. He cannot have been very lucky with these buccaneers. Nothing better illustrates the senselessness of their profession than the fact that after three years' plundering many of them were penniless and in rags.

Captain Swan, who had money and goods left over from his respectable trading days, was fortunately able to keep up their prestige by sending suitable presents of scarlet cloth and gold lace. In consequence, he was hospitably welcomed by the rapacious Sultan, and his nephew Rajah Laut, known as the General. Nearly every night they entertained him on shore with banquets, music and dancing girls; in return, he arranged for those of the buccaneers who could play the violin or dance English dances to give performances. This arrangement gave rise to an embarrassing complication:

"Among the rest of our men that did use to dance thus before the General, there was one John Thacker, who was a seaman bred, and could neither write nor read; but had formerly learnt to dance in

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas Cavendish, the second Englishman to sail round the world (1586-8) actually made the crossing in forty-four days. Drake was out of sight of land for sixty-eight days.

the music-houses about Wapping: This man came into the South Seas with Captain Harris, and getting with him a good quantity of gold, and being a pretty good husband of his share, had still some left, besides what he laid out in a very good suit of clothes. The General supposed by his garb and his dancing, that he had been of noble extraction; and to be satisfied of his quality, asked one of our men, if he did not guess aright of him? The man of whom the General asked this question told him, he was much in the right; and that most of our ship's company were of the like extraction; especially all those that had fine clothes; and that they came aboard only to see the world, having money enough to bear their expenses wherever they came; but that for the rest, those that had but mean clothes, they were only common seamen. After this, the General showed a great deal of respect to all that had good clothes, but especially to John Thacker, till Captain Swan came to know the business, and marred all; undeceiving the General, and drubbing the nobleman: For he was so much incensed against John Thacker, that he could never endure him afterwards; tho' the poor fellow knew nothing of the matter."

This incident was particularly humiliating, for it happened that whereas such lively cockneys as John Thacker had done quite well for themselves, some of the better educated, including Dampier, were literally destitute. There were continual rows between those who were too poor to live on shore, and therefore had to subsist on the frightful ship's stores, and those who could afford to hire houses and concubines in the town.

At first everyone had been thankful to come to rest on the island; in the words of Dampier: "... our men were almost tired, and began to desire a *quietus est*; and therefore they would gladly have seated themselves anywhere."

But after six months of idleness, self-indulgence and rows, when Swan still showed no signs of wishing to continue the voyage, the men began their all too common "murmurings." The truth was that Swan, now sick of buccaneering, was hoping that they would desert with the ship, leaving him behind. This in fact happened: early one morning in January 1687 the crew weighed anchor, while Swan and thirty-six others were on shore.<sup>1</sup> Dampier was actually by this time just as eager to escape as Swan, but, as owing to his poverty he was living on board, he found himself helplessly carried out to sea.

<sup>1</sup> Most of those who were left behind in the end fared worse than Dampier; some obtained passages to Batavia, but there Swan and his surgeon, while rowing to a Dutch ship in which they were to travel to England, encountered some natives who overturned their canoe and then stabbed them to death in the water. Those who remained at Mindanao were poisoned.

A long desultory voyage, as inconsequent as all buccaneering voyages, took him from island to island, from port to port ; from the Philippines to Pulo Condore off the coast of Cochin China, to St. John's island not far from the mouth of the Canton river, to the Pescadores near Formosa, where he found a Tatar garrison, back again to the Philippines, on to Celebes, to the island of Buton south-east of Celebes, through a dangerous strait to the north-west of Timor, and finally, for no particular reason, to New Holland :

" Being now clear of all the islands, we stood off south, intending to touch at New Holland, a part of Terra Australia Incognita, to see what the country would afford us."

As they lived mainly by plundering trading vessels, it is hard to know what advantages they expected from this mysterious undefined continent, lying far to the south of all trade routes, wrapped in the intimidating mists of ancient tradition. But then their wanderings were becoming more and more pointless ; no doubt these men who had roamed the Pacific from end to end in search of plunder and found themselves still poor had given up all hope of success. Curiosity, the ruling passion of their age, though in a disorganised form, was perhaps the one remaining motive in the minds of these thoroughly demoralised men.

Dampier, in common with others of his time, was not sure whether New Holland was an island, or part of the unknown continent :

" New Holland is a very large tract of land. It is not yet determined whether it is an island or a main continent ; but I am certain that it joins neither to Asia, Africa, nor America."

In another part of his journal he suggest that if traders were to open a southerly route across the Pacific from the Philippines to Tierra del Fuego, they would no doubt solve the mystery of the Southern Continent.

The buccaneers landed on the north coast of Australia, probably near Bathurst or Melville Island. They saw nothing that offered them any inducement to stay. The land was a flat sandy waste ; the grass was thin and patchy, water could only be had by digging wells. No tree larger than an apple-tree was observed, no bird larger than a blackbird, and no animals whatever. As for the human population—the "winking people of New Holland"—they were the basest savages that Dampier had ever encountered :

" The inhabitants of this country are the miserablest people in the world. The Hodmadods of Monamatapa,<sup>1</sup> though a nasty people,

<sup>1</sup> Monomatapa, a negro kingdom shown in early Portuguese maps south of the Zambezi.

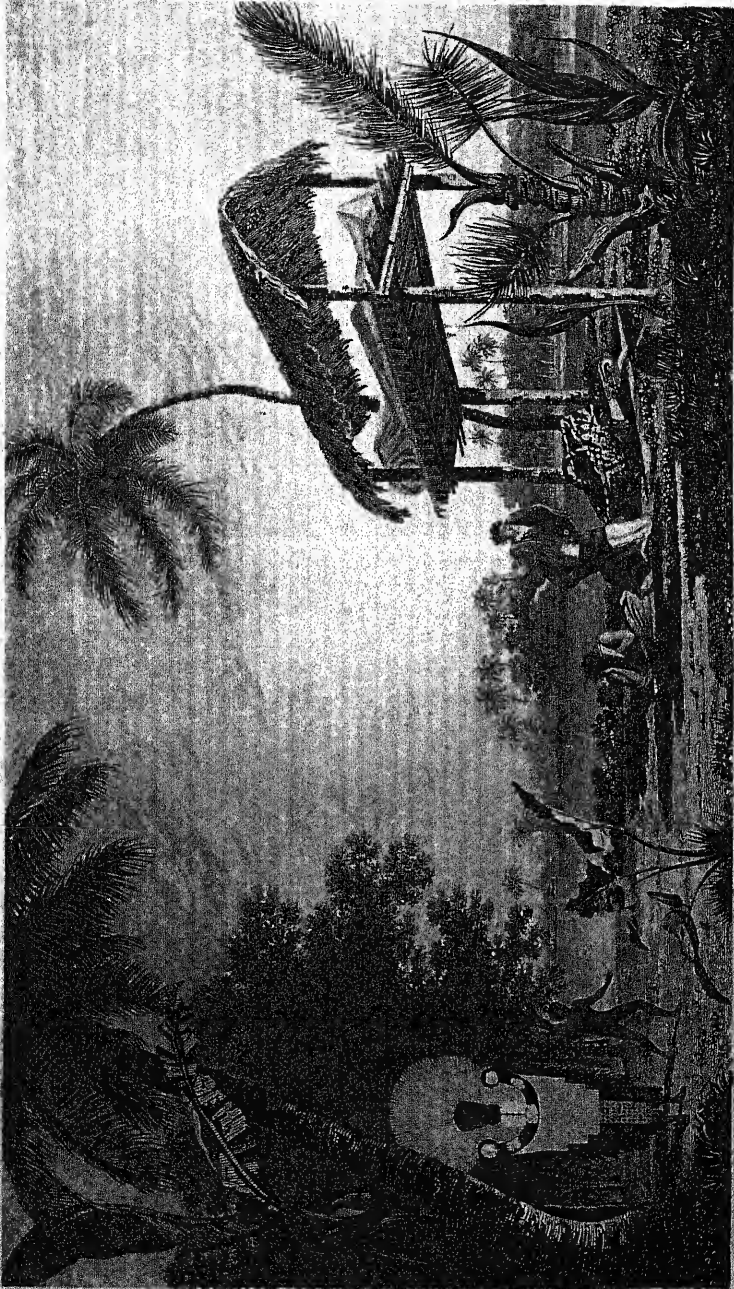


yet for wealth are gentleman to these ; who have no houses and skin garments, sheep, poultry, and fruits of the earth, ostrich eggs, etc., as the Hodmadods have : and setting aside their human shape, they differ but little from brutes. They are tall, straight-bodied, and thin, with long small limbs. They have great heads, round foreheads, and great brows. Their eye-lids are always half closed, to keep the flies out of their eyes ; they being so troublesome here, that no fanning will keep them off, they will creep into one's nostrils, and mouth too, if the lips are not shut very close ; so that from their infancy being thus annoyed with these insects, they do never open their eyes as other people : And therefore they cannot see far, unless they hold up their heads, as if they were looking somewhat over them.

" They have great bottle-noses, pretty full lips, and wide mouths. . . . They are long visaged, and of a very displeasing aspect, having no one graceful feature in their faces."

They had no houses, no boats, and no metal ; their only food was small fish washed up at high tide, which they trapped by building weirs with loose stones, having no hooks nor lines. At first they greeted the buccaneers in a threatening manner, brandishing their wooden swords and lances ; but the sound of a drum was enough to send them flying, " crying ' Gurry, Gurry ' speaking deep in the throat." Later they showed themselves docile but uninquisitive : when they were taken on board they greedily gobbled the rice and fish they were offered, without, however, taking the least notice of the ship or anything in it. An attempt to put them to useful work failed completely :

" After we had been here a little while, the men began to be familiar, and we clothed some of them, designing to have had some service of them for it : for we found some wells of water here, and intended to carry two or three barrels of it aboard. But it being somewhat troublesome to carry to the canoes, we thought to have made these men to have carried it for us, and therefore we gave them some old clothes ; to one an old pair of breeches, to another a ragged shirt, to the third a jacket that was scarce worth owning ; which yet would have been very acceptable at some places where we had been, and so we thought they might have been with these people. We put them on them, thinking that this finery would have brought them to work heartily for us ; and our water being filled in small long barrels, about six gallons in each, which were made purposely to carry water in, we brought these our new servants to the wells, and put a barrel on each of their shoulders for them to carry to the canoe. But all the signs we could make were to no purpose, for they stood like statues, without motion, but grinned like so many monkeys, staring one upon another : For these poor creatures seem not accustomed to carry burdens ; and



Funeral rites in Tahiti: a *toupapou* with a corpse on it attended by the chief mourner in ceremonial dress.  
*From an engraving after a drawing from nature by W. Hodges.*

PLATE XXXII



Icebergs in the Antarctic seen by Cook on January 9th, 1773.  
*From an engraving after a drawing from nature by W. Hodges.*



I believe that one of our ship-boys of ten years old, would carry as much as one of them. So we were forced to carry our water ourselves, and they very fairly put the clothes off again, and laid them down as if clothes were only to work in. I did not perceive that they had any great liking to them at first, neither did they seem to admire anything that we had."

When the time came to leave, Dampier, by now deeply discouraged with buccaneering, endeavoured to persuade his companions to sail to some English factory, where, presumably, he counted on finding either employment or a passage home. But it was as difficult for a buccaneer to escape from his profession as it is for a gangster today. The men feared that Dampier would report them to some avenging authority, and in reply to his suggestion, threatened to leave him on the sandy shore of New Holland. "This," writes Dampier, "made me desist, and patiently wait for some more convenient place and opportunity to leave them, than here." Even Dampier was not feckless enough to risk his future in this God-forsaken wilderness.

His opportunity came at the next stopping place, one of the Nicobar islands where, as he judged, "my stay could, probably, do our crew no harm should I design it." Moreover he had conceived one of his innumerable schemes for making his fortune; here, he considered, he had "also a prospect of advancing a profitable trade for ambergris with these people, and of gaining a considerable fortune to myself": Somewhat surprisingly, permission to leave the ship was granted; with his bedding and his "chest", which contained little but his carefully preserved journal, he was deposited in a small sandy bay near two empty houses. To such straits had this educated and not untalented man reduced himself: he was actually happy to be left stranded, destitute, on the beach of a small savage island.

But hardly an hour had passed before a party of armed men came to fetch him back. Resistance was clearly useless; resignedly, Dampier picked up his chest and bedding and allowed himself to be carried to the ship. He found the crew "in an uproar"; several others, including the surgeon, encouraged by his example, were clamouring to leave. The surgeon, an invaluable member of the crew, had to be detained on the ship by force; but Dampier, with a couple of Englishmen, a Portuguese and four Malays who had been picked up at different places during the voyage, were eventually, towards nightfall, taken to shore. As they landed, a sailor in the boat gave them an axe, which he had thoughtfully stolen for them from the ship.

It was now dark. A candle was lit, and Dampier guided his companions to one of the empty houses. Not until, with incredulous delight, they saw the hated ship sail out to sea did they feel themselves really safe:



"It was a fine clear moon-light night, in which we were left ashore. Therefore we walked on the sandy bay to watch when the ship would weigh and be gone, not thinking ourselves secure in our new-gotten liberty till then. About eleven or twelve o'clock we saw her under sail, and then we returned to our chamber, and so to sleep."

Dampier's liberty was not to be filled with anything so steady and prosperous as ambergris trading. Hardship and homelessness seem to have been his fate; perhaps a lugubrious kind of masochism really attracted him to such a life. The day after landing, they traded the axe for a native canoe, equipped her with a mast, a "substantial sail" made of mats, and outriggers to keep her from capsizing. Then, having taken in a stock of food and water, the whole party, eight men in all, packed into this canoe, which was about the size of a London wherry, and set sail for Achin.

This voyage in an open boat was an even more fearful experience than the march across the isthmus of Panama. On the third day out they observed "a very ill presage"—a circle round the sun, a sure sign of bad weather. That night a great storm arose, and the canoe was in grave danger of being swamped:

"The evening of this 18th day was very dismal. The sky looked very black, being covered with dark clouds, the wind blew hard, and the seas ran high. The sea was already roaring in a white foam about us; a dark night coming on, and no land in sight to shelter us, and our little ark in danger to be swallowed by every wave; and, what was worst of all, none of us thought ourselves prepared for another world. The reader may better guess than I can express, the confusion that we were all in. I had been in many eminent dangers before now, . . . but the worst of them all was but a play-game in comparison with this. I must confess I was in great conflicts of mind at this time. Other dangers came not upon me with such a leisurely and dreadful solemnity. A sudden skirmish or engagement, or so, was nothing when one's blood was up, and pushed forward with eager expectations. But here I had a lingering view of approaching death, and little or no hopes of escaping it; and I must confess that my courage, which I had hitherto kept up, failed me here; and I made very sad reflections on my former life, and looked back with horror and detestation on actions which before I disliked, but I now trembled at the remembrance of."

This is the only passage in all Dampier's long journal where he expresses any uneasiness about his irregular life.

After forty-eight harrowing hours of thunder and lightning, gales and rain, the men, all suffering from fever, and too weak to stand

upright, drifted into a river on the coast of Sumatra. Natives carried them to a nearby village, and proved "extraordinary kind"; but in spite of their care the Portuguese and one of the Englishmen died, while Dampier, who was brought to Achin in a critical condition, was almost killed by a dose from a Malay doctor.

The moral and physical shock of this voyage does not seem to have produced much of a reformation in Dampier's way of life. He was by no means restored to health, when, with his incorrigible taste for aimless adventure, he engaged himself on a ship making a trading expedition to Tongking. His journal gives a minute and interesting description of his journey by boat up the Red River to Cachao, and his stay in this important market town. But even these unusual experiences did not satisfy him: while he was still far from well, he decided to undertake of all things a walking tour! He had at that time only two dollars in the world, one of which went to pay his guide, with whom, incidentally, he was unable to converse in any language. Only Dampier would have set out to travel through a foreign country, without any reason, at a time when he was almost too weak to walk, and had insufficient money even to buy food! Luckily the people, perhaps mistaking him for some kind of wandering holy man, were extremely hospitable. He also had the good fortune to meet a friendly French missionary who, on hearing that he knew how to make gunpowder, begged him to try his hand with some ingredients and machinery in his possession, with which he himself had failed to obtain any satisfactory results. After drinking "a glass or two of wine" together, the priest and buccaneer went to work; somehow the gunpowder was made, and Dampier, although it was a fast day, was given a broiled fowl for supper.

After his return to Achin, Dampier made another voyage to Malacca and Fort St. George, Madras, before he obtained the post of gunner at Benkulen, in Sumatra, then a factory of the East India Company. Meanwhile he had acquired from a certain Mr. Moody a half-share in "two painted people": a "Prince Jeoly" and his mother, natives of a Pacific island, whom Moody had bought at Mindanao for sixty dollars. Jeoly was tattooed in a manner so remarkable that Dampier felt sure he could make a fortune by exhibiting him in England:

"He was painted all down the breast, between his shoulders behind; on his thighs (mostly) before; and in the form of several broad rings, or bracelets, round his arms and legs. I cannot liken the drawings to any figure of animals, or the like; but they were very curious, full of great variety of lines, flourishes, chequered work, etc., keeping a very graceful proportion, and appearing very artificial, even to wonder, especially that upon and between his shoulder-blades.

The showman into whose hands the poor prince eventually fell invented various fantastic tales to enhance his attractions :

" In the little printed relation that was made of him when he was shown for a sight in England, there was a romantic story of a beautiful sister of his a slave with them at Mindanao ; and of the Sultan's falling in love with her ; but these were stories indeed. They reported also that this paint was of such virtue, that serpents and venomous creatures would flee from him, for which reason, I suppose, they represented so many serpents scampering about in the printed picture that was made of him. But I never knew any paint of such virtue, and as for Jeoly, I have seen him as much afraid of snakes, scorpions, or centipedes, as myself."

While Dampier was gunner at Benkulen, he lodged the painted people in a little house outside the fort, and he seems to have grown very fond of them. Both fell ill ; the mother, in spite of Dampier's devoted nursing, died ; but Jeoly, whom he tended " as carefully as if he had been my own brother," recovered.

Dampier now began to long for his native country, " after so tedious a ramble from it " ; moreover, he was excited by the prospect of the money to be made out of Jeoly. In January 1691 a ship of the East India Company arrived at Benkulen in which he arranged for passages for himself and his charge. But Dampier could not even contrive his departure in an orderly manner. At the last moment, when Jeoly had already embarked, the governor of the fort refused to release him from his employment. Dampier had to slip away surreptitiously, " creeping through one of the port-holes of the fort " at midnight, and leaving behind all his possessions except his precious journal. This, and the painted prince, were all he had to show for twelve years' wandering around the world in search of wealth.

He failed to keep even this modest capital. Before he had disembarked at the docks of London his invariable need of money induced him to sell Jeoly, his beloved brother, to the first bidders that presented themselves :

" But I was no sooner arrived in the Thames, but he being sent ashore to be seen by some eminent persons ; and I being in want of money, was prevailed upon to sell first, part of my share in him, and by degrees all of it. After this I heard he was carried about to be shown as a sight, and that he died of small-pox at Oxford."

His remaining asset, his journal, proved more valuable than he could have anticipated. Appearing in 1697, it was an immediate success, and ran into three or four editions within a few months. That this long-winded and often rather tedious book should have become a

best-seller illustrates the almost fantastic fashion for natural history which prevailed at this time.

Now, after years of failure and obscurity, the world-weary sailor suddenly found himself a celebrity. He had dedicated his book, in shrewdly fulsome language, to Charles Montague, then President of the Royal Society. Through Montague Dampier came to the notice of Edward, Earl of Oxford, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, and the Lord High Admiral, Thomas Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. These gentlemen invited him to draw up proposals for a voyage of discovery. Dampier suggested the exploration of the coasts of New Holland: his scheme was approved, and in 1699 he left England on this expedition in command of His Majesty's ship *Roebuck*.

Like everything else in his life, the expedition was mismanaged. He had planned to take the western route to New Holland, through the Straits of Magellan and across the southern Pacific. Had he carried out his intention he might have been the first Englishman to see New Zealand, and the first of any nation to make known to the world the fertile eastern coast of Australia.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately his fatal habit of changing his mind made him decide at the last moment to take the Cape route instead. In consequence he struck Australia on the west coast, a region as arid as that which had appalled him on his earlier voyage, and after following the coast for five weeks without finding any good supply of water, he grew discouraged and sailed away to Timor. From there he proceeded to New Guinea, and followed the north-eastern coast until he discovered the island of New Britain. He was now able to obtain plentiful provisions, and had he continued to skirt the coast of New Guinea, he, and not Captain Cook, might have had the honour of discovering Torres Straits<sup>2</sup> and the eastern side of Australia. Instead, being depressed by the condition of his ship, he turned back for home.<sup>3</sup>

The weaknesses in his character—despondency, irresolution—had

<sup>1</sup> The eastern coast may have been known to the obscure sixteenth-century Portuguese voyagers, but it had not been visited by the Dutch.

<sup>2</sup> The Portuguese Torres, who left Callao with de Quiros in December 1605, sailed through these straits without realising that they divided Australia and New Guinea. He thought that the hills of Cape York, Australia, were a group of islands.

<sup>3</sup> During the homeward voyage the *Roebuck*, which had apparently been in a shocking state from the beginning of the expedition, leaked so badly that she had to be abandoned at Ascension, which she reached in a sinking condition. Dampier and his men were rescued from this uninhabited island soon afterwards by some British men-of-war. The expedition was altogether unlucky for Dampier. On the way out to Australia he had quarrelled so violently with his lieutenant that he had put the man in irons and handed him over as a prisoner to the Governor of Bahia, who had kept him for some time there in the common gaol. When Dampier returned to England there was a court martial, as a result of which he was found guilty of cruelty and oppression, fined, and pronounced "not a fit person to be employed as commander of any of Her Majesty's ships."



rendered a voyage, which might have been an historic contribution to the world's knowledge, no more than a not very revealing excursion into an unfrequented area. As the Dutch had already mapped most of the western coast of Australia, no one thought much of him as an explorer. Perhaps by way of excusing himself, he painted the worst possible picture of New Holland: "If it were not," he admits, "for that sort of pleasure which results from the discovery of even the barrenest spot upon the globe, this coast of New Holland would not have charmed me much." The exploration of this continent demanded a man such as Cook, possessed of a much more robust enthusiasm for discovery, and free from any amateur's desire to be charmed.

*Captain Cook's<sup>1</sup> Journal during his First Voyage Round the World made in H.M. Bark "Endeavour," 1768-71.*

When Captain James Cook left England in August 1768 on his first voyage to the Pacific, little more was known of that ocean than in the time of Dampier. Anson, sailing round the world on his official marauding expedition against the Spaniards earlier in the century, had discovered nothing. Two expeditions subsequently sent to the Pacific by the British Admiralty for the purpose of exploration had brought about no remarkable results: Commodore Byron, who left England in 1764, had crossed the ocean without seeing any land except coral reefs and some insignificant islands; the most important discovery of Captain Wallis, who had sailed immediately after his return, was the island of Tahiti. The French navigator de Bougainville, who had sailed round the world soon after,<sup>2</sup> had likewise failed to discover anything but a few islands. All these explorers had passed to the north of New Guinea, thus missing Australia and New Zealand. In consequence, Australia was still an unfinished coastline on the map as drawn by the Dutch explorers of the previous century, and was still thought to join New Guinea, while New Zealand had not been seen by anyone since Tasman<sup>3</sup> who, skirting only the western coasts, and mistaking the passage between the islands for a bay, had thought that it formed part of the Southern Continent.

Cook was one of the earliest of the second series of great British,

<sup>1</sup> *James Cook (1728-1779)* was born at Marton Village, Cleveland, Yorkshire the son of an agricultural labourer. He started work at the age of twelve as apprentice to a haberdasher at Staithes, near Whitby, and soon afterwards, at his own request, was apprenticed to Messrs. Walker, shipowners, of Whitby, whom he served for years in the Norway, Baltic and Newcastle trades.

<sup>2</sup> 1767-9.

<sup>3</sup> In 1642-3.

explorers, who in the latter part of the eighteenth century took up the work begun two hundred years before by Chancellor, Jenkinson, Lancaster and Drake. The discoveries of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods had been made in the interests of trade; when their purpose—the opening up of new markets and new sources of raw materials—had been accomplished, the passion for exploration had died down. Few discoveries of importance were made between the mid-seventeenth and the mid-eighteenth century; England was busy exploiting her commerce in Asia and her colonies in America, scientific curiosity was directed to investigating in detail the known world; only an aimless wanderer such as Dampier had occasion to wander outside its boundaries.

Geographical curiosity revived in the latter part of the eighteenth century when England had, so to speak, digested her earlier discoveries. In the same year that Cook first sailed to the Pacific, James Bruce began his quest for the source of the Blue Nile, the first of the great overland journeys into the interior of Africa. Twenty years later the African Association was formed, which was to sponsor the amazing expeditions of Mungo Park. After the interruption of the Napoleonic Wars, exploration was resumed with increased enthusiasm. The interior of Africa was gradually made known by the celebrated nineteenth-century explorers, men such as Livingstone and Stanley, Burton and Speke, while the least penetrable portions of the globe, the Polar regions, the jungles of South America, the deserts of Central Asia where Sir Aurel Stein<sup>1</sup> traced the ancient transcontinental caravan routes, have occupied explorers up to modern times.

As the remaining productive parts of the world were gradually discovered and appropriated by the western nations, so explorers, driven into fearful jungles, deserts of sand and ice and snow, became increasingly scientific and disinterested. Nearly all modern expeditions have been prompted purely by the desire for knowledge. The nineteenth-century explorers of Africa, on the other hand, had mixed motives: missionary zeal, imperialist ambitions, an idealistic conception of the white man's civilising influence, the perennial dream of gold, were mixed, often incongruously, with a self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of science. In the time of Cook, acquisitive ambition was yet stronger. It was still thought that the world might hold another continent as rich as Asia; in his secret "Orders and Instructions" the discovery of the Southern Continent is described as an act that would "redound greatly to the honour of this nation as a Maritime Power, as well as to the dignity of the Crown of Great Britain, and may tend greatly to the advancement of the trade and navigation thereof"; while his directions for examining it strangely resemble those

<sup>1</sup> See Asia.

issued by Cabot to Willoughby and Chancellor on their voyage in search of the treasures of the East :

" You are also carefully to observe the nature of the soil and the products thereof, the beasts and fowls that inhabit or frequent it, the fishes that are to be found in the rivers or upon the coasts and in what plenty : and in case you find any mines, minerals, or valuable stones, you are to bring home specimens of each, as also such specimens of the seeds of trees, fruits, and grains as you may be able to collect."

Such were the hopes of the Admiralty : to discover new sources of fish, fruit, gold or precious stones, in short, to advance British commerce. But the expedition had actually been undertaken at the instigation of the Royal Society, for the very different purpose of making observations, from the Pacific, of the transit of Venus over the sun's disc. This astronomical event was due to take place in 1769, and not again for more than a hundred years : it was of the greatest importance that observations should be taken from different parts of the world, for these would determine the distance of the earth from the sun. The voyage, therefore, was designed with two objects : empire building and astronomy ; the old-fashioned pursuit of wealth, the modern pursuit of knowledge.

Cook himself approached both these tasks in the spirit of a scientist. A forerunner of the modern type of explorer, he was wholly free from the Elizabethan greed for riches and glory. The only reward he solicited, and that was not until after his second voyage of discovery, was to be appointed Captain of the Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich, at a salary of two hundred pounds a year. No one could make a more complete contrast to the grandiloquent, voracious navigators of the earlier age than this modest, businesslike, uncovetous commander, who has been described by a contemporary as " plain both in his address and appearance."

Cook was indeed so exemplary a character as to seem rather colourless in comparison with such picturesque figures as Raleigh or Drake. Yet his life was sensational enough. The son of an agricultural labourer, he was self-made and self-educated. Going to sea as a boy, at the age of twenty-seven he was offered the position of master on a trading vessel, turned this down to join the navy, began his career all over again as an able seaman, and within two years had risen to the position of master of a ship engaged in attacking the French possessions in North America. After the capture of Quebec in 1759 he was employed in charting and mapping the coasts of Canada and Newfoundland, and in this capacity he had so distinguished himself that in 1763 he was granted the somewhat unusual post of " Marine surveyor of the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador." At the same time he began to make a reputation as an astronomer and mathematician. Acting on

his own initiative, in 1766 he made observations of an eclipse of the sun which brought him to the notice of the Royal Society.

The Admiralty had therefore made a much wiser choice in sending Cook to explore the Pacific than when they had sent poor melancholy meandering Dampier. Cook's exceptional competence manifested itself in preparations for the voyage. He himself selected the ship, not one of the Admiralty's vessels, but a barque of three hundred and sixty-eight tons built for the coal trade at his native Whitby, where he had first taken to the seafaring life. He also picked each of his officers and men, and personally supervised the purchase and storing of the provisions—matters usually neglected, with disastrous results, by earlier commanders. It is indeed pleasant, after reading of the cruel and unnecessary troubles that ruined so many early English voyages, the leaking ships and rotten provisions, the intrigues and mutinies and sickness and starvation, to learn that at last an expedition left England which, if not very generously conceived—one ship seems hardly sufficient for the exploration of a continent—was at least adequately equipped and prepared with foresight and good sense.

Cook was to perform the functions both of commander and chief astronomical observer; a Mr. Green, of the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, was appointed to assist him as second observer. In addition, a party of talented and distinguished gentlemen accompanied him. Joseph Banks, a wealthy young man who at the age of twenty-five had already made a name for himself as a naturalist, and had been in Newfoundland at the same period as Cook collecting plants and insects, joined the expedition at his own expense. With him he bought an eminent botanist—Dr. Solander—a naturalist, and no less than three painters,<sup>1</sup> besides a natural history library, and much elaborate apparatus for his work. Indeed when Cook's humble vessel, the *Endeavour*, finally left England, she carried a company almost as brilliant as that with which Lord Macartney twenty-five years later sought to impress the Emperor of China.

Shortly before they were due to sail, by great good fortune Captain Wallis returned from his voyage in the Pacific. His enticing description of his main discovery, Tahiti,<sup>2</sup> convinced the Royal Society that this would be an excellent place from which to observe the transit of Venus. Cook was therefore able to leave England with the agreeable prospect of doing his astronomical work in this luxuriant tropical beauty spot: moreover he had the solid advantage of being able to take with him two officers who had sailed the Pacific with Wallis.

<sup>1</sup> The naturalist was H. Sporing, the artists J. Reynolds, S. Parkinson and A. Buchan. Mr. Sporing and Mr. Buchan died soon after leaving Batavia, as did also Mr. Green.

<sup>2</sup> He had named it George III Island.



The story of the *Endeavour's* voyage to Tahiti is happily uneventful. It is a striking proof of Cook's outstanding ability as a commander that scurvy, which had halved Anson's crew on his voyage to the Pacific twenty-seven years earlier,<sup>1</sup> made no appearance on the *Endeavour*. With the energy that Cook applied to all matters, large and small, he took steps to prevent the disease from the day the ship put to sea. Diet was rigorously regulated, and when fresh food was not available the men were served daily with sauer-kraut, "portable soup," or malt—unusual provisions which he had stored on board in large quantities. At first the men took badly to the sauer-kraut, but Cook, by having it served every day at his own table, soon induced them out of snobbery to follow his example :

... "for such are the tempers and dispositions of seamen in general, that whatever you give them out of the common way—altho' it be ever so much for their good—it will not go down, and you will hear nothing but murmurings against the man that first invented it; but the moment they see their superiors set a value on it, it becomes the finest stuff in the world, and the inventor an honest fellow."

As a result of these precautions the crew reached Tahiti in admirable health, the only casualties on the way being one or two men who accidentally fell overboard and drowned, and two black servants belonging to Banks who died of cold during an ill-advised botanising expedition in Tierra del Fuego.

At Tahiti Cook displayed that flair for handling primitive people which was later to prove invaluable to him. During his three months' stay he suffered nothing worse from the islanders than petty thieving. This, however, became serious, when, shortly before the transit of Venus was due to take place, the most precious of all the astronomical instruments, the quadrant, was found to be missing; but Cook, by taking some of the chiefs as hostages, induced the islanders to return it the same day. Apart from this incident, his visit was peaceful and satisfactory: Fort Venus, which included a laboratory, was erected on shore, flying the Union Jack above its thatched roof; the chiefs attended various dinner parties, and a grand celebration in honour of the King's birthday, on board the *Endeavour*; in return, the Englishmen were entertained with native wrestling matches and concerts and dances. "The music and singing," Cook remarks drily, "was so much of a piece that I was very glad when it was over."

The day of the transit, June the third, dawned clear and fine; the observations were made in ideal conditions :

"Not a cloud to be seen the whole day, and the air was perfectly

<sup>1</sup> See China.

clear, so that we had every advantage we could desire in observing the whole passage of the planet Venus over the sun's disc. We very distinctly saw an atmosphere or dusky shade round the body of the planet. . . ."

When, rather more than a month later, Cook prepared to leave, numbers of the natives offered to accompany him. One called Tupia, an important person, being both a chief and a priest, was eventually accepted because he had travelled to the neighbouring islands and was acquainted with their geography, peoples and customs. This distinguished savage was, after all, a better guide than none in the search for the unknown continent.

After touching at several of the Society Islands, where Tupia proved a helpful escort, Cook steered to the south. Tupia was now of little use; he admitted having heard his father speak of certain islands in these seas, but he knew nothing of any continent or large tract of land. Day after day the *Endeavour* plodded through a vacant ocean; the sea grew "troubled," the weather cold. Once the Englishmen were excited by the appearance of high land to the eastward, but this turned out to be only clouds. Meanwhile the pigs and fowls brought from the Society Islands died of cold. The boatswain's mate also died, from an alcoholic orgy brought on, it seems, by boredom:

"Monday 28th. Fresh gales and cloudy, with rain in the latter part. At ten departed this life Jno. Rearden, boatswain's mate; his death was occasioned by the boatswain out of mere good nature giving him part of a bottle of rum last night, which it is supposed he drank all at once. He was found to be very much in liquor last night, but as this was no more than what was common with him when he could get any, no farther notice was taken of him than to put him to bed, where this morning about eight o'clock he was found speechless and past recovery."

As they drove south they were increasingly hampered by gales and squalls, hail and rain. At last, after nearly three weeks, having found nothing but albatrosses and "pintado birds," Cook determined to turn north before his ship suffered worse damage. In succession to Drake, he had made another of those negative discoveries that gradually eliminated the Southern Continent from the map.

Cook sailed for nearly a month northwards and westwards before sighting land. This was a cape on the east side of the North Island of New Zealand, named by Cook Young Nick's Head, in honour of the boy called Nicholas Young who had first seen it from the masthead. Cook was always scrupulously fair in paying tribute to his crew; absence of vainglory was one of his most attractive characteristics.

The next day a hilly, wooded coast came into view, with a great surf beating against steep cliffs, houses in the distance, people standing

on the shore, and others moving about the bay in canoes. Most fortunately it was discovered that Tupia could speak their language, for they greeted the English landing party by flourishing their spears and dancing their war-dance; one of them was shot attempting to steal Mr. Green's arms, and but for Tupia's explanations the day might well have ended with a massacre.

All Tupia's eloquence and Cook's composure were needed in dealing with these Maoris; during the six months that Cook spent sailing round New Zealand they showed themselves truculently intractable.<sup>1</sup> If Cook was plain in his address and his appearance, he was also plain in his writing: his journal, remarkable only for understatement and a somewhat chilly humour, gives but a poor idea of this extraordinary journey. To appreciate his heroism, the reader has to remind himself that his adventures occurred in a savage, unexplored land, thousands of miles from even the remotest part of the known world, and that the humdrum manner in which they are recorded is in itself a convincing proof of his heroism. To have charted and mapped the coastline of both islands, a distance of some two thousand four hundred miles, in the face of the implacable hostility of the native population, with only one battered ship and a handful of his countrymen to protect him, is a task which few, if any, of the more flamboyant early navigators would have undertaken. Nothing, it seems, could shake his nerve. Time and again he replied to the fanatical threats of the Maoris by calmly going ashore accompanied by only two or three companions, a display of courage, equally fanatical in a cold way, which inevitably quelled his enemies. His account of how he replied to one of these ferocious welcomes by making an inland excursion with Mr. Banks, Dr. Solander and Tupia, entered a native village and was received with enthusiastic respect, would be breathtaking were it not written with such inhuman equanimity:

"Upon this point stood many people, who seemed to take little notice of us, but talked together with great earnestness. In about half an hour several canoes put off from different places and came towards the ship; upon which the people on the point also launched a canoe, and about twenty of them came in her up with the others. When two of these canoes, in which there might be about sixty men, came near enough to make themselves heard, they sung their war song; but seeing that we took little notice of it, they threw a few stones at us, and then rowed off towards the shore. We hoped that we had now done with them; but in a short time they returned, as if with a fixed resolution to provoke us into battle, animating themselves by their

<sup>1</sup> Cook had expected this: a number of Tasman's men had been murdered by the natives at Massacre Bay, in what is now Cook's Strait—the strait between the islands.

song as they had done before. Tupia, without any directions from us, went to the poop and began to expostulate. He told them that we had weapons which would destroy them in a moment, and that if they ventured to attack us we should be obliged to use them. Upon this they flourished their weapons, and cried out in their language: 'Come on shore, and we will kill you all.'

'Well,' said Tupia, 'but why should you molest us while we are at sea? As we do not wish to fight, we shall not accept your challenge to come on shore; and here there is no pretence for a quarrel, the sea being no more your property than the ship.'

"This eloquence of Tupia, though it greatly surprised us, having given him no hints for the arguments he used, had no effect upon our enemies, who very soon renewed their battery. A musket was then fired through one of their boats, and they immediately fell astern and left us.

"Accordingly at daylight in the morning I set out with the pinnace and longboat, accompanied by Mr. Banks, Dr. Solander, and Tupia. We found the inlet end in a river, about nine miles above the ship, into which we entered with the first of the flood, and before we had gone three miles up it, found the water quite fresh. We saw a number of natives, and landed at one of their villages, the inhabitants of which received us with open arms. We made a short stay with them, but proceeded up the river until near noon, when finding the face of the country to continue pretty much the same, and no alteration in the course or stream of the river, or the least probability of seeing the end of it, we landed on the west side, in order to take a view of the lofty trees which adorn its banks, being at this time twelve or fourteen miles within the entrance, and here the tide of flood runs as strong as it does in the river Thames below the bridge."

The character of the natives, who were given to cannibalism and neglected religion—"with respect to religion," remarks Cook, "I believe these people trouble themselves very little about it"—made any extensive inland exploration impossible; but when Cook set sail from New Zealand he had mapped the coastline of both islands, and yet further reduced the supposed area of the Southern Continent. Indeed, he had by now begun to doubt its existence: "as to a Southern Continent," he remarks, "I do not believe any such thing exists, unless in a high altitude." North of 40 degrees south there was a "small space" unvisited by any European navigator where, he thought, "the grand object" might lie; but the exploration of this area had to be left for another voyage. Meanwhile he had to decide on his homeward course. Regretfully he discarded the idea of returning by Cape Horn; this route might have led him to further discoveries concerning the Southern Continent, but his ship was in no state to make a voyage through



those southern latitudes during the winter months. He therefore determined to return by the East Indies and the Cape of Good Hope, first sailing westwards to the coast of New Holland, and then following it in a northerly direction.

This programme was actually more ambitious than he anticipated ; his two-thousand-mile voyage up the east coast of Australia, his navigation of the deadly waters of the Great Barrier Reef, must be considered one of the most astounding of maritime achievements. Cook struck Australia at the southern end of the east coast, at a point that he named Ram Head, because of its resemblance to " the Ramhead going in to Plymouth Sound." He was always making these homely comparisons ; reminiscences of the gentle English landscape occurred to him, apparently, in the most uncouth and savage quarters of the globe. His first sight of New Holland, which had been made notorious by Dampier's dismal descriptions, was a pleasant surprise :

" The weather being clear gave us an opportunity to view the country, which had a very agreeable and promising aspect, diversified with hills, ridges, plains, and valleys, with some few small lawns ; but for the most part the whole was covered with wood, the hills and ridges rise with a gentle slope ; they are not high, neither are there many of them."

Coming to anchor a few days later in a sheltered bay, as usual he went ashore accompanied only by Mr. Banks, Dr. Solander, and the faithful Tupia. Here, however, they had to manage without the help of Tupia's urbane diplomacy, for he was unable to understand a single word that was spoken by the very dark-skinned natives who gathered on the beach. Luckily these people were more inclined to run away than to attack ; during the days that the *Endeavour* lay at anchor in the bay, although they refused to form " connections " with the Englishmen, they did nothing worse than shoot an occasional arrow from behind a tree. Meanwhile Banks and Solander were able to collect the gratifying number of new plants that gave this place the name of Botany Bay, and Cook hoisted the English colours on shore, and inscribed on a tree a record of his visit. So began the civilisation of Australia.

The voyage up its long eastern coast was less agreeable than this first experience might have led the Englishmen to hope. Rocks and shoals kept them in a continual state of alarm ; near Cape Grafton, about a month after leaving Botany Bay, on a clear moonlight night the ship ran aground on a coral reef. Cook's matter-of-fact narrative conveys little of the consternation that he must have felt, when, after throwing overboard " guns, iron and stone ballast, casks, hoop staves, oil jars, decayed stores, etc.," amounting to forty or fifty tons in weight, the ship remained stuck fast, with rocks protruding through

her bottom, and her leaks growing every hour more serious. His only comment is a single sentence slipped into the flat, technical account of his predicament : " This was an alarming, and I may say, terrible circumstance, and threatened the immediate destruction to us." The Englishmen were then about twenty miles from land, and that land was the savage coast of an unexplored continent.

By good fortune such as would have inspired paragraphs of devout rhetoric from an Elizabethan navigator, after twenty-four harrowing hours the ship was refloated. Cook merely acknowledges, with his usual fair-mindedness, the admirable conduct of everyone on board :

" In justice to the Ship's Company, I must say that no men ever behaved better than they have done on this occasion ; animated by the behaviour of every gentleman on board, every man seemed to have a just sense of the danger we were in, and exerted himself to the very utmost."

Soon afterwards a convenient harbour was found, and the crew set about to make the necessary repairs.

But their troubles had only just begun. Six weeks later, when the *Endeavour* was fit to sail again, Cook climbed to the top of a high hill to take a view of what lay ahead. The coastline was not an inviting one :

" It afforded us a melancholy prospect of the difficulties we are to encounter, for in whatever direction we looked it was covered with shoals as far as the eye could see."

Cook continued to thread his way through the terrible waters between the Great Barrier Reef and the shore until he had no more than three months' provisions left ; only then he decided to give up the slow, nerve-racking exploration of the coast and hasten back to civilisation across the open sea. On August fourteenth a passage through the Reef was found, and safely navigated, to the inestimable relief of everyone on board :

" The moment we were without the breakers we had no ground with 100 fathoms of line, and found a large sea rolling in from the S.E. By this time I was well assured we were got without all the shoals, which gave us no small joy, after having been entangled among islands and shoals, more or less, ever since the 26th of May, in which time we have sailed above 360 leagues by the lead without ever having a leadsmen out of the chains when the ship was under sail ; a circumstance that perhaps never happened to any ship before, and yet it was here absolutely necessary."

Their joy was shortlived. Only two days later, in the darkness

before dawn, the sinister roaring of the surf was heard ; when day broke, they found themselves beset by a danger more menacing than any they had experienced inside the Reef. Even Cook was affected by the horror of their situation, which inspires the only dramatic passage in all his account of the voyage :

" A little after four o'clock the roaring of the surf was plainly heard, and at daybreak the vast foaming breakers were too plainly to be seen not a mile from us, towards which we found the ship was carried by the waves surprisingly fast. We had at this time not an air of wind, and the depth of water was unfathomable, so that there was not a possibility of anchoring. In this distressed situation we had nothing but Providence and the small assistance the boats could give us to trust to ; the pinnacle was under repair, and could not immediately be hoisted out. The yawl was put in the water, and the longboat hoisted out, and both sent ahead to tow, which together with the help of our sweeps abaft, got the ship's head round to the northward, which seemed to be the best way to keep her off the Reef, or at least to delay time. Before this was effected it was 6 o'clock, and we were not above 80 or 100 yards from the breakers. The same sea that washed the side of the ship rose in a breaker prodigiously high the very next time it did rise, so that between us and destruction was only a dismal valley, the breadth of one wave, and even now no ground could be felt with 120 fathom. The pinnacle was by this time patched up, and hoisted out and sent ahead to tow. Still we had hardly any hopes of saving the ship, and full as little our lives, as we were full 10 leagues from the nearest land, and the boats not sufficient to carry the whole of us ; yet in this truly terrible situation not one man ceased to do his utmost, and that with as much calmness as if no danger had been near. All the dangers we had escaped were little in comparison of being thrown upon this reef, where the ship must be dashed to pieces in a moment. A reef such as one speaks of here is scarcely known in Europe. It is a wall of coral rock rising almost perpendicular out of the unfathomable ocean, always overflowed at high water generally 7 or 8 feet, and dry in places at low water. The large waves of the vast ocean meeting with so sudden a resistance makes a most terrible surf, breaking mountains high, especially as in our case, when the general Trade Wind blows directly upon it."

At this critical moment, small intermittent gusts of wind arose, which mercifully drove the ship a little distance from the rocks. Then a narrow passage through the Reef was observed ; but when the entrance was reached the Englishmen were astonished to encounter the ebb tide "gushing out like a mill stream, so that it was impossible to get in." A little later, however, another opening was found, through which it was decided to risk sailing the ship :

"Narrow and dangerous as it was, it seemed to be the only means we had of saving her, as well as ourselves. A light breeze soon after sprung up at E.N.E., with which, the help of our boats, and a flood tide, we soon entered the opening, and was hurried through in a short time by a rapid tide like a mill race, which kept us from driving against either side."

Reflecting on this miraculous escape, for once Cook gives way to personal feelings, reveals, albeit apologetically, the harrowing strain that attended his persevering pursuit of knowledge :

"It is but a few days ago that I rejoiced at having got without the Reef; but that joy was nothing when compared to what I now felt at being safe at anchor within it. Such are the vicissitudes of this kind of service, and must always attend an unknown navigation where one steers wholly in the dark without any manner of guide whatever. Was it not from the pleasure which naturally results to a man from his being the first discoverer, even was it nothing more than land or shoals, this kind of service would be unsupportable, especially in far distant parts like this, short of provisions and almost every other necessary. People will hardly admit of an excuse for a man leaving a coast unexplored he has once discovered it. If dangers are his excuse, he is then charged with timorousness and want of perseverance, and at once pronounced to be the most unfit man in the world to be employed as a discoverer; if, on the other hand, he bodily encounters all the dangers and obstacles he meets with, and is unfortunate enough not to succeed, he is then charged with temerity, and, perhaps, want to conduct. The former of these aspersions, I am confident, can never be laid to my charge, and if I am fortunate to surmount all the dangers we meet with, the latter will never be brought in question; altho' I must own that I have engaged more among the islands and shoals upon this coast than perhaps in prudence I ought to have done with a single ship and every other thing considered. But if I had not I should not be able to give any better account of the one half of it than if I had never seen it; at best, I should not have been able to say whether it was mainland or islands; and as to its produce, that we should have been totally ignorant of as being inseparable with the other; and in this case it would have been far more satisfaction to me never to have discovered it. But it is time I should have done with this subject, which at best is but disagreeable, and which I was led into on reflecting on our late dangers."

Cook brilliantly justified his audacity. A few days later he came to the northernmost point of the continent, which he named Cape York, in honour of the late Duke of York, a brother of George III. From here he could see the mainland sloping away to the south-west; to



the northward were shoals and islands through which he counted on finding a passage into the "Indian Seas." He had in fact discovered that Australia was not joined to New Guinea, and he had ascertained the contour of the continent. Before leaving he formally took possession of the country in the name of George III,<sup>1</sup> recording this historic occasion in the history of European knowledge and the development of the British empire in his usual impassive, unassuming style :

"Having satisfied myself of the great probability of a passage, thro' which I intend going with the ship, and therefore may land no more upon this eastern coast on New Holland, and on the western side I can make no new discovery, the honour of which belongs to the Dutch navigators, but the eastern coast from the Lat. of 38 S. down to this place, I am confident, was never seen or visited by any European before us ; and notwithstanding I had in the name of His Majesty taken possession of several places upon this coast, I now once more hoisted English colours, and in the name of His Majesty George III took possession of the whole eastern coast from the above Lat. down to this place by the name of New Wales, together with all the bays, harbours, rivers, and islands, situated upon the said coast ; after which we fired three volleys of small arms, which were answered by the like number from the ship."

As Cook had anticipated, he was able to sail northwards into the "Indian Seas." Passing through a perilous channel between the shoals and islands, which he named Endeavour Strait, a few days later he found himself off the savage southern coast of New Guinea. The ship being now in desperate need of repairs, he hastened to Batavia, stopping only to buy food at the Dutch island of Suva, the sight of coconuts and cattle grazing being "a temptation hardly to be withstood by people in our situation."

When he reached Batavia, just over two years after leaving England, there was not a single case of scurvy on board. It must have been heartbreaking, after maintaining this incredible record of good health throughout all the hardships and privations of the voyage, that now, on his return to civilisation, his men immediately fell victims to disease. While the ship was being repaired, fever and dysentery, which made Batavia at that period one of the unhealthiest spots in the world, attacked nearly every member of his company. Eight had died, including the devoted Tupia, when he set sail on Christmas Day ; deaths occurred almost daily in the Indian Ocean, by the time Table Bay was reached the survivors were in a state bordering on panic :

"Such was the despondency that reigned among the sick at this time,

<sup>1</sup> On an island which he named Possession Island.

nor could it be by any means prevented, when every man saw that medicine, however skilfully administered, had not the least effect. I shall mention what effect only the imaginary approach of this disorder had upon one man. He had long tended upon the sick, and enjoyed a tolerable good state of health; one morning, coming upon deck, he found himself a little griped, and immediately began to stamp his feet, and exclaim, 'I have got the gripes, I have got the gripes: I shall die, I shall die!' In this manner he continued until he threw himself into a fit, and was carried off the deck, in a manner, dead; however he soon recovered, and did very well."

So did most of the others, after a month's rest at Cape Town enjoying the "clear and pleasant weather." An uneventful voyage brought them home in July 1771, Nicholas Young, the boy who had first sighted New Zealand, being the first to see the English coast.

The effect of Cook's voyage was to complete Australia and New Zealand on the map, to prove that neither was part of the Southern Continent, and to add these lands to the British Empire. But Cook was by no means satisfied with what he had accomplished. Before leaving the Pacific he had already formed plans for a second voyage of discovery, and only a year after returning home he left England again with two ships for the purpose of finally settling the question of the Southern Continent.

This voyage, in which he circumnavigated the world close to the Antarctic circle, and covered more than twenty thousand leagues, nearly three times the equatorial circumference of the earth, must surely rank as one of the greatest of human achievements. Sailing in a southeasterly direction from the Cape of Good Hope, he was the first man in history to cross the Antarctic circle. He then turned north-east, reached New Zealand, and from there made a survey of that "small space" north of 40 degrees where he had thought the continent might lie, sailing in a great circle to Tahiti, the Society Islands, the Friendly Islands, and back again to New Zealand. Having refreshed his men there he again went south into the Antarctic, sailed as far as 70° 10' south, the farthest south reached by any ship until 1832, turned north again, called at Easter Island,<sup>1</sup> where he marvelled at the gigantic primitive statues once before seen by the Dutch navigator Roggewein, proceeded to the Marquesas Islands, to familiar Tahiti, which had by now become the earthly paradise of his much-tried men, to the Society Islands, to the Friendly Islands, to the New Hebrides—discovered but not explored by Quiros and de Bougainville<sup>2</sup>—and

<sup>1</sup> On Easter Day 1722.

<sup>2</sup> Quiros sighted Espiritu Santo—one of the New Hebrides—in 1606, but thought it was part of the Southern Continent; de Bougainville visited the islands on his Pacific voyage in 1768.

back again to New Zealand, discovering New Caledonia, Norfolk Island and the Isle of Pines on the way. He then at last set sail for home eastwards across the Pacific, made a rapid survey of Tierra del Fuego, crossed the southern Atlantic, touched at South Georgia, discovered the South Sandwich Islands, reached the Cape of Good Hope, and so made his way to England, deviating from his course in order to ascertain the exact position of Fernando Noronha, a little island off the coast of Brazil.

Islands were discovered on this tremendous voyage, many others, only once seen or visited, were mapped and explored; but his greatest discovery was a negative one: the non-existence of the Southern Continent. Birds, seals, whales, and terrifying icebergs, fog, snow, and sleet, were all he encountered on his exceedingly dangerous excursions into the Antarctic in a ship not equipped as an icebreaker. Each time he drove to the south, inevitably, the ice fields checked his progress: beyond, as he rightly guessed, there might be some land close to the Pole, "but if there is," he sagely, observes "it can afford no better retreat for birds, or any other animals, than the ice itself with which it is wholly covered."<sup>1</sup>

On arriving at the Cape for the second time, having completed his circumnavigation of the world, he felt justified in saying that the quest for the Southern Continent was at an end: "Thus I flatter myself, that the intention of the voyage has, in every respect, been fully answered: the southern hemisphere sufficiently explored; and a final end put to the searching after a Southern Continent, which has, at times, engrossed the attention of some of the maritime powers, for near two centuries past, and been a favourite theory amongst the geographers of all ages." Some large tract of land, he concludes, might well exist farther south than he had been able to penetrate, but his experience of the most southerly islands he had visited suggested that such land was not worth discovering: "Lands doomed by Nature to perpetual frigidness; never to feel the warmth of the sun's rays; whose horrible and savage aspect I have not words to describe. Such are the lands we have discovered; what then may we expect those to be, which lie still farther to the south? For we may reasonably suppose that we have seen the best, as lying most to the north. If any one should have resolution and perseverance to clear up this point by proceeding farther than I have done, I shall not envy him the honour of the discovery; but I will be bold to say, that the world will not be benefited by it."

So the world's great discoveries came to an end with the discovery of nothing; the dream of the Southern Continent died in the desolate

<sup>1</sup> *A voyage towards the South Pole and Round the World Performed in His Majesty's Ships Resolution and Adventure. In the years 1772, 1773, 1774 and 1775. Written by James Cook, Commander of the Resolution. London MDCCLXXVII.*

icy wastes of the Antarctic. All Europe's geographical dreams, ideal images of the unknown world, had been destroyed, but none so conclusively. The dream of the wealthy East, the continent of jewelled lakes and palaces, emperors and monsters and miracles, the continent in which Paradise itself was to be found, dissolved slowly amid the dilatory devious wrangling of merchants and monarchs and the swift sordid deaths in fever-stricken factories; the dream of El Dorado, of the golden west, was shattered by the fight for life in the fertile, formidable forests of the New World. One man, a plain man, without the imagination to conceive such dreams, had the honour of annihilating the last of them, the unique privilege of finding, not something less glorious than had been anticipated, but nothing at all.

Cook's voyages finally made known the outline of the world. His second voyage was followed, barely a year after his return, by a third,<sup>1</sup> which had for its object the solution of another long-standing geographical mystery, that of the North-west Passage. There are signs that Cook's almost superhuman self-assurance deteriorated during this last enormous undertaking: hasty decisions, ruthless severity, outbreaks of ill-temper, mar the impassivity which in his earlier expeditions seems to have been unshakable. But strained and impatient, aware, perhaps, that his time was short, he none the less accomplished his unrewarding task. Sailing up the coast of North America he passed through Bering Straits, continued northwards in search of the Passage until his inescapable enemy, the ice, made further progress impossible. By this failure the world was shown at last that no North-west Passage existed except in the Arctic regions; and both the negative discoveries made with such naïve audacity by Francis Drake, the first Englishman to sail the Pacific, were confirmed. Turning south, Cook sailed straight from the Arctic seas to the luxuriantly beautiful Hawaiian Islands, which he had discovered earlier on the voyage<sup>2</sup>, and there, like Drake in California two centuries before, he was acclaimed a god by the native population. But Cook, though he might well appear superhuman, had his death to meet like other men; by a slip in behaviour he revealed his mortality and was murdered by the people of Hawaii in an access of rage and disappointment.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Or possibly only rediscovered. They had perhaps been seen by the Spanish navigator Gaetano in 1555, but if so, their existence had been kept secret at the time and was subsequently forgotten. Cook named the group the Sandwich Islands, after the Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty 1771-1782, who hardly deserved the honour, being a corrupt and incompetent administrator, and a member of the notorious Monks of Medenham, a society of satanists.

<sup>3</sup> An account of the voyage was published in 1784 (*A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean* . . . in 1776-1780), in three volumes, the first and second being written by Cook, with illustrations. The work caused a considerable sensation, but Horace Walpole a snob in matters of taste, was not impressed by it. In a letter to



Cook died having completed his life-work, and his life-work was to complete the discovery of the world. After him, no major discoveries could be made. The world's continents had been numbered; the fertile areas of the earth, those fit for trade and agriculture, cities, warehouses and palaces, had been ascertained. Europeans, deprived of any further sensational expectations, had to make the best of the vast territories already open to them. The English, who for more than two centuries had confounded gain with glory, whose sailors and explorers, merchants and ambassadors, collectors and tourists, had sought to secure for their small ambitious island the wealth and beauty of the world, now knew the territorial limits to their unlimited aspirations, were left with the task of consolidating a huge empire, and the harder task of justifying its existence.

The End.

Lady Ossory of June 19th, 1784, he wrote: "Capt. Cook's Voyage I have niether read nor intend to read. I have seen the prints—a parcel of ugly faces with blubber lips and flat noses, dressed as unbecomingly as though both sexes were ladies of the first fashion; and rows of savages with backgrounds of palm trees. Indeed I shall not give five guineas and half—nay, they sell already for nine, for such uncouth lubbers: nor do I desire to know how unpolished the north or south poles have remained ever since Adam and Eve were just such mortals."

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is hardly possible for me to express adequately and in detail in so limited a space my thanks to the many people who have most kindly advised me on the innumerable small problems that arose in the writing of this book. I am particularly indebted to those who attended to my difficulties, and gave me facilities for research in the harassing years 1944 and 1945 during which the greater part of the work was done.

I shall always remember with gratitude and pleasure my conversations with Mr. A. Bahr, who allowed me the privilege of seeing part of his Chinese collection and gave me permission to reproduce the water colours given to Lord Macartney by the emperor Ch'ien Lung now in his possession.

I have also happy memories of the hours spent with Mrs. Vernon at Bishop's Lydeard House, Taunton, studying her manuscript copies of Horace Walpole's letters to Lady Ossory.

My warm thanks are due to Mr. Felix Topolski for giving me constant access to his interesting collection of illustrated books, and for much friendly co-operation; also to Colonel and Mrs. Taylor for lending me over a period of months their book on primitive American painting.

In my search for illustrations I have received invaluable assistance from Sir William Foster, whose kindness in taking an interest in my work I greatly appreciate; Mr. Gerald Reitlinger who most kindly gave information concerning the Persian miniature in his collection presumed to be a portrait of Sir Robert Sherley; Mr. Charles A. Greenwood, of the Iran Society (London) who went to considerable trouble to help me; Mr. Basil Gray of the British Museum and Mr. William King of the British Museum, both of whom gave me much of their valuable time; and Mr. James Laver, who with unfailing patience advised me on the reproduction of engravings in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

I should like to thank the staffs of the Library of the British Museum, the Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the London Library for their courteous and patient assistance. Even after the London Library had been bombed, I was permitted to work in the Reading Room amid the debris, and I am most grateful for this considerate favour.

Special thanks are due to my husband, Sir Francis Rose, for help in designing the dust jacket, and for suggesting the title of this book.

I cannot hope to express here my deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Maurice Collis, not merely for reading the typescript, making numerous helpful suggestions concerning the eastern sections, and giving me the benefit of his literary experience, but for generous encouragement which is too rare to be described in a few conventional words.

I am grateful to Mrs. Harry MacNeil Bland for permission to reproduce the painting by Joseph Becker in her collection, and to Miss Jean Lipman for permission to reproduce her painting *Winter Sunday in Norway, Maine*.

I am indebted to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, for permission to reproduce the American primitive painting *The Quilting Party*; to the Victoria and Albert Museum for permission to reproduce an enamel of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; to the Wallace Collection for permission to reproduce a miniature by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, and to George Routledge & Sons Ltd. for permission to reproduce plates from *Journal of a Slave Dealer*.

I am indebted to the following for permission to quote extracts from books:

Miss P. Armstrong for permission to quote from *Turkey in Travail*, and *Turkey and Syria Reborn* by Harold Armstrong; Mr. Cecil Beaton and B. T. Batsford Ltd., for permission to quote from *Near East*, Cassell & Company Ltd., for permission to quote from *The Desire and Pursuit of the Whole* by Frederick Rolfe, Baron Corvo; Faber and Faber Ltd., for permission to quote from *Journey to a War* by Christopher Isherwood and W. H. Auden, and from *Warning from the West Indies* by W. M. Macmillan; Mr. C. D. Medley for permission to quote from *Confessions of a Young Man* by George Moore; Macmillan and Co. Ltd., for permission to quote from *On Central Asian Tracks* by Sir Aurel Stein, and from *West African Studies* by Mary Kingsley; The Richards Press Ltd., for permission to quote from *Chinese Confessions* by Charles Mason; Miss Cecily Mackworth and George Routledge & Sons Ltd., for permission to quote from *I came out of France*.

## INDEX

- ACHIN, 353  
 Adams, Clement, "The new navigation," 119-125  
 Adamson, 239  
 Addison, Joseph, "Remarks on parts of Italy," 48  
 Alexander, J. E., "Narrative of a voyage among the Colonies of Western Africa," 254-259  
 Amadas, Philip, "First voyage to the coasts of America," 274-296  
 Amazons, 260  
 Anderson, Aenius, "A narrative of the British Embassy to China," 201-204  
 Anson, George, 186-191  
 Antarctic circle, 369  
 Antigua, 247-252  
 Arica, 333  
 Armstrong, Harold, "Turkey in Travail," 109-110; "Turkey and Syria reborn," 110, 111  
 Aruba, 223, 224  
 Astrakan, 127, 128  
 Atkins, John, "A short account of that part of Africa inhabited by the negroes," 237  
 Auden, W. H., and Isherwood, "Journey to a war," 216  
 Australia, 340, 355, 364, 368  
  
 BAGHDAD, 134-136  
 Baltimore, 308, 316  
 Bananas Island, 242, 243  
 Barbados, 226-229, 239  
 Barlowe, Arthur—see Amadas  
 Batavia, 368  
 Beaton, Cecil, "Near East," 269-272  
 Beckford, William, "Italy," 56-61  
 Bencoolen, 353, 354  
 Bering Straits, 371  
 Blois, 7  
 Bokhara, 130  
 Bombay, 153, 154  
 Boston, 294, 298  
 Botany Bay, 364  
 Boulogne, 22  
 Burgundy, 23  
 Burton, Richard, 260  
 Byron, Lord, 61-64  
  
 CALIFORNIA, 335, 336  
 Calleo, 33  
 Canary Islands, 221  
  
 Canton, 189, 190, 203, 204  
 Cape Fear river, 299  
 Cape Francisco, 333  
 Cape of Good Hope, 369  
 Cape Town, 369  
 Cape Verde, 261  
 Caribbean, 344  
 Chicago, 322-324  
 Chile, 345  
 China coast, 177-183  
 Cincinnati, 304-308, 316  
 Clarke, E. D., "Travels in various countries," 104-109  
 Colt, Sir Henry, "Voyage to the Islands of the Antilles," 226-231  
 Constantinople, 71-74, 75-88, 91-111  
 Cook, Capt. James, "Journal during his first voyage round the world," 356-372  
 Corvo, Baron, "The desire and pursuit of the whole," 66-69  
 Coryate, Thomas, "Cruities," 1-6  
 Curzon, Robert, "Visits to monasteries in the Levant," 102-104  
  
 DAHOMEY, 260  
 Dallam, Master Thomas, "Diary," 77-87  
 Dallington, Sir Robert "A method for travel," 6-8  
 Dampier, Sir William, "Voyage round the terrestrial globe," 341-356  
 Dickens, Charles, "American Notes," 310-318  
 Dieppe, 26  
 Dijon, 20  
 Drake, Sir Francis, 327-340  
  
 EASTER ISLAND, 369  
 Endeavour Strait, 368  
 Euphrates, 134  
 Evelyn, John, "Diary," 8-13  
  
 FLETCHER, Francis, "The world encompassed by Sir Francis Drake," 328-339  
 Florida, 224  
 Fokien, 210  
 Fortune, Robert, "A journey to the tea countries of China," 205-210  
 Fountainhall, Lord, "Journals," 13-17  
 Freetown, 254-257, 269, 270



- GAINSFORD, Thomas, "The glory of England, 87, 88  
 Gautulco, 334  
 Goa, 175, 176  
 Gold Coast, 260  
 Grand Canal of China, 217  
 Great Barrier Reef, 365-367  
 Guam, 347  
 Guiana, 282  
 Guinea coast, 262  
 Gulf of Guinea, 260
- HAKLUYT, Richard, "Voyage of the Susan of London to Constantinople," 72-74; "Voyage of Richard Chancellor, 119-125; "Voyage of three tall ships . . . to the East Indies," 146-151; Sir John Hawkins and the West African slave trade, 218  
 Hawaiian Islands, 371  
 Hawkins, Sir John, 218, 221-225  
 Haydon, Benjamin Robert, "Autobiography," 25-29
- ISFAHAN, 137-142  
 Isherwood, Christopher, *see* Auden
- JAMAICA, 239, 240, 267, 268  
 Java, 338  
 Jchol, 193, 196-200  
 Jenkinson, Anthony, "Voyage from Moscow to Boghar," 126-131  
 Jonson, Ben, 2  
 Josselyn, John, "Account of two voyages to New England," 293-298
- KIANG-SEE, 210  
 Kingsley, Mary, "West African studies," 261-265  
 Koo-shan, 209, 210
- LA PLATA, 346  
 Lassels, Richard, "The voyage to Italy," 36-44  
 Law, Robert, "Voyage to the coast of Guinea," 237, 238  
 Levant, monasteries in the, 102, 103  
 Liberia, 260, 271, 272  
 Lhasa, 161-164  
 Lyons, 5, 6
- MACARTNEY, Lord, "Journal of an Embassy to China," 192-201  
 Mackworth, Cicely, "I came out of France," 33-35  
 Macmillan, W. M., "Warning from the West Indies," 265-269  
 Maine, 296, 297  
 Malacca Straits, 147, 176  
 Mandeville's "Travels," 115, 170-173
- Manning, Thomas, "Journey to Lhasa," 138-164  
 Manwaring, George, "True discourse of Sir A. Sherley's travel into Persia," 133-142  
 Marseilles, 12  
 Mason, C. W., "Chinese confessions," 213-215  
 Miller, Lady Anne, "Letters from Italy," 49-56  
 Mindanao, 347, 348  
 Moluccas, 116, 336  
 Montague, Lady Mary Wortley, "Letters," 94-102  
 Mont Cenis, 52  
 Montargis, 5  
 Moore, Francis, 238  
 Moore, George, "Confessions of a young man," 29-33  
 Moore, Dr. John, "A view of society and manners in Italy," 48, 49  
 Moore, Thomas, "Letters and journals of Lord Byron," 62-64  
 Moscow, 125, 127  
 Movlins, 5  
 Mundy, Peter, "Travels," 174-183
- NEVERS, 5  
 Nevis, 226  
 New England, 310-312  
 New Guinea, 368  
 New Holland, 349-351, 364  
 New Wales, 368  
 New York, 309, 312-315, 319-321  
 New Zealand, 361-363  
 Nicobar Islands, 351  
 Niya river, 166, 167
- "OBSERVATIONS on a journey to Naples," Anon, 47, 48  
 Omaha, 324  
 Oregon, 334  
 Orinoco river, 280  
 Orleans, 6, 14  
 Ossory, Lady, *see* Walpole  
 Owen, Nicholas, "Life," 242-247
- PALESTINE, 113-115  
 Paris, 3, 4, 8-12, 14, 17-20, 24-35  
 Peking, 191, 195  
 Penang, 147  
 Pennsylvania, 309  
 Percy, Master George, "Discourse of the plantation of the southern colony in Virginia, 283-285  
 Perth, James, Earl of, "Letters," 44-47  
 Peru, 345  
 Philadelphia, 308, 309, 321, 322  
 Phillipines, 116  
 Phillips, Thomas, 239

Pittsburgh, 316  
 Poitiers, 14-16  
 Prince's Island, 257-259

RALEIGH, Sir Walter, 277; "The discovery of the . . . Empire of Guiana," 278-283  
 Richmond, 316  
 Roberts, Joseph Jenkins, 260  
 Rowe, 40, 52  
 Ruskin, John, "Stones of Venice," 64-66  
 de Ruyter, 232-234

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ISLAND 226, 229-231, 252, 253  
 Sala, George, "America revisited," 318-325  
 Sandys, George, "Relation of a journey," 88-94  
 San Francisco, 324  
 Schaw, Janet, "Journal," 247-253, 299-303  
 Sherboro Island, 243-247, 262  
 Sherley, Sir Anthony, 132-143  
 Sierra Leone, 221, 222, 260, 262  
 Singapore, 176  
 Slave trade from West Africa to America and West Indies, 219, 220, 231-236  
 Sloane, Sir Hans, "A voyage to Madeira, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica," 239-241  
 Smith, Capt. John, 274, 275, "General history of Virginia, New England and the Summer Islands, 285-292  
 Smollett, Tobias, "Travels through France and Italy, 22, 23  
 Snelgrave, Capt. William, "A new account of some parts of Guinea and the slave trade," 234-236  
 Sparke, John, "The voyage made by Mr. John Hawkins," 221

Stein, Sir Aurel, "On central Asian tracks," 166-169  
 Surat, 154-156  
 Suva, 368

TABLE BAY, 368  
 Tahiti, 360, 369  
 Thicknesse, Philip, "A year's journey through France and Port of Spain," 19-22  
 Thorne, Robert, "Information of the parts of the world," 117  
 Tierra del Fuego, 327, 370  
 Torkington, Sir Richard, "Pilgrimage," 113, 114  
 Trinidad, 268  
 Trollope, Frances, "Domestic manners of the Americans," 303-311  
 Tunhuang, 167  
 Turin, 39

VALPARAISO, 332  
 Venezuela, 222  
 Venice, 40-44, 46-49, 52-69  
 Virginia, 274, 276, 277, 283-293  
 Volga, 127

WALPOLE, Horace, "Letters to Lady Ossory," 17-19  
 Walter, Richard, "Voyage round the world by George Anson," 186-191  
 Washington, 315, 316  
 Webbe, Edward, "Travailes," 757-7  
 West Indies, 225, 226  
 Wilmington, 300-303

YORK CAPE, 367  
 Young, Arthur, "Travels in France and Italy, 23-25

ZANZIBAR, 147